

Seasonable Truths
IN
EVIL-TIMES:
IN

Several Sermons, lately preached, in
and about London: viz.

- I. Of Grace growing and increasing.
- II. The first and last in Suffering-work.
- III. The way to obtain a sure and great Reward.
- IV. The Two Witnesses their Testimony.
- V. The uncertainty of the World.
- VI. Mens Wrath against Gods people, shall turn to Gods praise.
- VII. Comfort to Mourners for the loss of the Solemn Assemblies.
- VIII. The evil of Unbelief in departing from God.
- IX. A warning to Apostates.

By *William Bridge*, late Preacher of the
Word of God at *Tarmouth*.

L O N D O N: 1111

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Scriptural Terms

EVLING'S

- General Sermon, preached in
the Chapel of the University of
Oxford, on the 10th of
the month of June, 1788.
The first of the series of
the way to obtain a true and
lasting peace.
IV. The Two Worlds, the
V. The universality of the
VI. The universality of the
VII. Comfort to Ministers for the loss of the
VIII. The fall of the
IX. A warning to Apostates

by the Rev. Mr. [Name], late Rector of the
Church of St. [Name]

LONDON:

Printed for [Name], at the [Name], in
[Name] Street, [Name] 1788.



Of Grace growing and increasing.

S E R M. I.

I Theſſ. 4. 1.

That as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk, and to please God; so ye would abound more and more.



He Apostle having exhorted the Thessalonians in the former part of this Epistle to perseverance in grace, as you read in the former Chapter, vers. 8. *For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord;* and at vers. 13. of the same Chapter, *To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God even our Father;* he doth here in this Chapter exhort them to Christian Progression, growing and increasing in Grace. So in this first Verse of this fourth Chapter.

In this Exhortation three things are considerable:

1. The Matter which he exhorteth them unto, in the later end of the verse, *That they would abound more and more in the work of the Lord.*

2. The Manner of his Exhortation, and that

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is with much earnestness: *We beseech you brethren, and exhort you; and, We exhort you by the Lord Jesus.*

3. The Reason or Motive that he uses to press this Exhortation: *That as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk, and to please God. Ye cannot say that ye have not been taught: for both I and others have taught you, and ye have received of us how ye ought to walk, and to please God. Now therefore seeing that ye have received this of us, see that ye abound more and more.*

That ye abound more and more. Beza and others, they have the words read thus: *So that ye excel more and more.* I will not dispute the Translation. There is one great Truth which the words at first view do hold forth unto you; and that is this:

It is the earnest desire of those, that are faithful in the work of the Ministry, and ought to be the care of all the Saints themselves, to abound in the work of the Lord yet more and more.

We are not onely to have grace, but to abound and grow. So he exhorts them in vers. 10. of the same Chapter: *But we beseech you brethren that ye increase more and more.* The Apostle is express in this Exhortation: *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.* And in 2 Cor. 7. 1. *Having therefore these promises, let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*

In the Text it is called **ABOUNDING** more and more; in vers. 10. it's call'd **INCREASING** more and more; by the Apostle Peter it's call'd **GROWING** in grace; by the Apostle Paul it's call'd **PERFECTING** of holiness. Now this you will

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 will finde, if you look into Ephes. 4. the end of
 Christs ascension, and the end of all our Ministry;
 of all our preaching, and your hearing, that ye
 may abound in the work of the Lord more and
 more, and that ye may be made perfect. He that
 descended, is the same alse that ascended up far above
 all heavens: and he gave some Apostles, and some Pro-
 phets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and
 Teachers; for the perfecting of the Saints, till we
 all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge
 of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the mea-
 sure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. Then in
 ver. 15. But speaking the truth in love, may grow up
 into him in all things which is the head, even Christ.
 So that you see this to be our great care that we
 preach the Word, and the endeavour of all those
 that hear it, that ye may abound in the work of
 the Lord yet more and more; that your mind
 increase, that ye may grow in grace. And as you
 will finde to be Paul's ONE thing, Phil. 3. 13. Bre-
 thren, I count not my self to have apprehended; but
 this one thing I do, (so you read it) forgetting those
 things that are behind, and reaching forth to those
 things which are before, I press towards the mark, &c.
 This one thing I do, so you read it albe the words
 [I do] are not in the Greek, but thus it is in one
 thing. Brethren, I count not my self to have appre-
 hended; but this is the one thing, forgetting those things
 that are behind, and reaching forth to those things
 that are before. Our Lord and Saviour Christ he
 had his one thing necessary; and David had his one
 thing too; One thing have I desired; and here how
 Paul he hath his one thing, one thing for the
 Saints, and that is this, We forget what is past; and
 press on to that which is before, labouring to increase

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and to grow in grace; and perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

And this you shall finde to be the end of all those afflictions which we meet withal from God the Father. God the Father is unwilling to afflict his children; he would not do it unless it were necessary; why the end of his affliction we finde to be this, in Job. 15. 2. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

And this you shall find to be the end of Christs coming, as you read in Job. 10. 10. I am come, that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. There lies a poor soul, saith Christ, dead in trespasses and sins; I am not onely come to give life unto that soul, (spiritual life) but that he may have it in more abundance. So that it is not onely our duty to have grace, but we must abound therein more and more; we must grow therein. And, my Beloved,

It is not onely the duty of the Saints to do so, but they will, and they do do this. So saith David, I will praise thee yet more. And if you look Rev. 2. you shall finde that this was the commendation of the Church of Thyatira, at vers. 19, that her works were more at the last then at the first. Proppinde it; it is a great and a glorious commendation: O that it were the commendation of all the Churches now being! With some it is contrary, their works are more at the first then at the last; saith he concerning the Church of Thyatira, I know thy works, and thy charity, and the last to be more then the first. Where there is a truth of grace; there will be a growib. Read I pray what

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what is said in *Prov. 4. 18.* But the path of the just is as the shining light; that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. That shineth more and more. Look how it is with the light of the day, so with the grace of God in the hearts of his people; the light is small and little at the beginning of the day, but it shineth more and more, it grows brighter and brighter unto perfect day: and so though grace in Gods people be but little at first dawning, yet that light and grace that is in them, it grows every day brighter and brighter unto perfect day.

I but there is a great deal of danger, through the great opposition that the Saints meet withal, that their light should be quite put out: they are in great danger to loose all, for they meet with much opposition, yea and the rather, because that they do grow. But as the Torch by being beaten burns the better: so the Saints do by their opposition, they grow stronger and stronger; as in *Jab 17.* Upright men shall be astonished at this, &c. the righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger. His opposition should make him grow more and more: when he is chidden from following Christ, and the Ordinances and the ways of Christ, he will cry so much the more, *Jesus thou son of David have mercy upon me.* And if you look into *Acts 9.* you shall finde that Paul did increase by the opposition he met withal: when he was much opposed by the Jews, it's said, *vers. 22.* But Saul increased the more in strength, and confirmed the Jews. He increased the more.

God hath a hand upon all the hands of opposition against his children; and it is so far from

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putting out their light, that it makes their light to grow brighter and brighter.

In the next place, the Saints do not onely increase and abound more and more, but they can do no other, they cannot but grow in grace; for so the promise is, *To him that hath shall be given, and he shall have it in more abundance.* Now the Godly they have grace, and therefore upon that account of the promise, they shall have it in more abundance. And so in that place of *Isaiab*, *He that waiteth upon the Lord shall renew his strength, he shall mount up as with eagles wings*: there shall be an addition of strength unto him, he shall increase and abound yet more and more. In Scripture-phrase, grace it is called *life*: indeed it is our spiritual life. Now you finde that all your sublunary lives, where they are there is growth: the plant or the tree it grows, because it hath life; and the beall grows, because he hath life. The Sun, Moon and Stars, though they move apace, they do not grow; why? because they have no life: they have light, but no life, and so they grow not: but all the people of God they have a spiritual life, and so they will, and do, and must, and cannot but grow. They make God himself their uttermost and their last end. What a man makes his last and his uttermost end, that he labours to grow up unto more and more; he never hath enough of it. Some men make riches their last and their uttermost end; and they never have enough. Some make God their end, and riches a means to serve God; they can have enough: but when a man makes riches his last and his uttermost end, and never stints himself, he never thinks he hath enough. Now the children of
God

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God they make God himself their last and their uttermost end, his service and grace; and therefore they never have enough: they cannot have enough, but must labour to grow and increase, and abound more and more.

And besides, they look upon grace, and growth and increase in grace, as their greatest excellencies. What a man looks upon as his excellency, that he doth much desire. Some place an excellencie in fine Gardens; and if they see a dainty flower in anothers Garden, they will never be at quiet till they have the like in their own Garden, because therein they place an excellencie. Now there are many increases in the world, wherein men place great excellencie, and therein they labour to abound more and more. And now saith a godly creature, A rich man looks upon riches as his excellencie, and therefore would yet have more: an honourable man looks upon credit as his excellencie, and therefore he would have more: So do I look upon grace as my excellencie, and therefore I must yet have more. A godly man having once tasted of the sweetness that is in the ways of God, Oh, saith he, 'tis so sweet, I must yet have more: give me more of this; though I die for it, yet give me more of this. He doth grow, and he cannot but grow and abound yet more and more.

Object. I but you will say to me, Then am I afraid that I never had any truth of grace, because I do not finde that I do grow in grace: where there is truth, there will be growth, and there will be increasing: but as for me, I do not finde any such growth and increase, and therefore I fear that I never had grace at all.

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Ans. For answer : As a man may have grace and not know it, so he may have grace and not perceive it : his earnest desire of having more and more still, makes him forget what he hath.

The more grace one hath, the more he doth see sin ; and the more a man sees his sin, the more his own grace will be hidden from his own eyes. Godly men do oftentimes measure themselves by Metaphors ; as sometimes we that are Preachers of the Word, we fall upon a Scripture-metaphor, as where Christ is call'd a *sun*, a *shield*, or *bread* ; and we run the Metaphor off its legs, further then the Holy-ghost did intend : so sometimes we do. So it is with Christians too ; they fall upon a Scripture-metaphor, and they run it and themselves off their legs, beyond what the Holy-ghost doth intend. For example, increase of grace in Scripture-phrase is called a growth : now because a Christian cannot finde his own spiritual increase answerable to all outward growth, therefore he thinks that he doth not increase in grace : whereas there is a great deal of difference between a spiritual increase, and an outward growth, in many things : As now, a mans body grows, but all the parts of his body do not grow out of his head ; but now in our spiritual growth it is so, as you read in Col. 2. 19. *And not holding the head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.* Why here our spiritual increase in all the members comes from the head : it is not so in our outward growth ; all the members of our body do not grow out of our head ; but in our spiritual growth it is so. And so many other differences might be given,

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given. But now because that Christians do not finde their (spiritual) increase every way answerable to an outward growth, therefore they call all into question many times, and say, Oh I do not grow in grace, and so I have no grace at all. Celestial bodies, as the Sun, Moon and Stars, they move apace, and may run hundreds of miles in an hour; yet when you look upon them, they seem to be fixt, and you see no motion: But look now upon your terrestrial bodies, men or beasts, moving before you, you see them move. So now, when a man looks upon his increase in riches, he may perceive that; but when you cast your eyes upon those celestial bodies, Saints, you will think they are fixt, and they move not at all: and so you will think sometimes concerning your selves, that you do not move at all, and yet move, and stir, and increase, and abound more and more. So that I say, first, As a man may have grace, and not know it; so 'tis possible for a man to increase in grace, and not perceive it.

Object. Oh but I fear that I do not increase and abound more and more; for I do nothing now more for God then what I have done before, will some say. I pray now, and I did pray before; I hear the Word, and I did hear before; I read the Scripture in private, and I did read before; I examine mine own heart, and I did so before; I find no addition at all made to my spiritual condition; what I did before, that I do now; and therefore I fear that I am not grown in grace; and therefore that I never had any grace at all: for where there is truth, there will be growth.

Ans. First, for answer to this, you must know that growth in grace doth not always consist in

doing

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doing of other works for the kinde, but in doing the same works over and over again better then before: As now, when one learns to write, when a man hath attained to a great perfection in Writing, he doth not make other letters then he made at first: he makes the same letters that he did, onely he makes them better, and sets them closer. So now, in your growth and increase in grace, you must not think that you shall make other letters, or do other duties, but shall do the same duties now, and exercise the same grace now, as before: onely you will set your duties and graces closer together, and you will do the work better then you did before.

But secondly, It may argue more grace, to do the same work afterwards. Pray consider this: I say, it may sometimes argue more grace to do the same work afterwards. As for example: suppose a man be an old man, or an old woman, when this person was young he pray'd it may be an hour or two hours in a day: now he is grown old, and his body is infirm and weak, to do the same thing now, argues more grace now then before: and therefore if you look into Psal. 92. you shall finde that this is made the growing of those that are old, that they shall bring forth fruit still: *The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree: they shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon: they shall grow.* Those that be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God. Well, and what shall he do when he is old? As ver. 4. *They shall bring forth fruit in old age.* He doth not say that they shall grow, but this bringing forth fruit still in old age is his growth: so that sometimes it may argue more grace to do the same work afterwards then before.

Ob.

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Object. Oh but yet some will say, I am afraid that I do not grow in grace, and so indeed that I never had any truth of grace; for now I am much declin'd; at the first my heart it was mightily enlarged for God, and now it's straitned. O what freedom once I had! I remember a time when I went to prayer, and wept, and mourned, and my heart broke and melted; but now my heart is exceeding cold, and very dead, and therefore I am even afraid that I am declined, and that I do not grow in grace, and so that I never had grace at all.

Ans. Give me leave to fix here a little, and to answer this Objection, that I may speak a word of stay to those that are weary and troubled. And now as your Objection arises, so shall my Answer rise. Before, I said a man may grow in grace and not perceive it; now I speak further, a man may grow and increase in grace, and yet think he is much declined; a man may increase, and yet think that he is much decreased. For, my Beloved, sometimes, yea often, good people do measure themselves by that first affliction which they had at their first turning to God: and then the change was specifical; & afterwards the change is gradual. When a man is first converted and turned to God, then he is turned from sin to God, from sin to grace, from the world to Christ: afterwards he doth not change from the world to Christ, but he changes from grace to grace, from glory to glory: 'tis but a gradual change afterwards; and therefore the change at the first being a specifical thing, his affections were high then. At our first conversion and turning to God, all things are span-new; and we are apt to

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be much affected with new things, and therefore the affections must needs be very much up and raised at the first, and when a man doth first convert and turn to God, and leave the world: God the Father doth as it were take the poor soul into his arms when 'tis a babe, and he doth bestow many desires upon it; and he gives out many encouragements, to weigh down those discouragements that the soul shall meet withal in parting with the world. But now afterwards, when a man is more able to go alone, possibly he doth not meet with these; now shall a man think therefore that all is naught, and that he hath no grace at all, because he doth not feel what he had then? Yet how often is this!

But besides, good people do mistake because of their ignorance, whereby they call that sin which is grace; and that grace which is sin. Thus I mean, it's a great sin for a man to doubt of Gods love, and to lie down upon his face, and to be discouraged, as if there were no hope for him in God: why many that are weak now, they look upon this as a great vertue; to doubt of their condition, and to call all into question: afterwards they are freed from these doubtings, and so they do grow in grace: but because they do look upon these doubtings as marks of vertue, they think because they have lost these, that now they are quite declined, whereas indeed they are grown in grace.

But secondly, in answer to this, you must know that our Christian growth is fourfold.

1. There is a growth of affection.

2. Growth in extension.

3. Growth in regard of firmness and rootedness.

4. And

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4. And growth in regard of spiritualness.

A man grows these four ways spiritually.

Sometimes his affection grows more intense not then it was before: sometimes a mans growth is in regard of extention, his affections of love or joy extending to other objects then before. So in *Hosea* our growth is described to be a *spreading of the branches*. And sometimes a man grows when he is more firm and rooted in the way of God; and so our spiritual growth in that place of *Hosea* is described by our *taking root downward*. And sometimes a man is said to grow when he is more spiritual. Beloved, weak Christians look altogether at the intenseness of their affections; and if they do not finde their affections so intense as they were before, then they break forth and say, Oh now I am declined; and now I am decayed, and I have lost my first love; whereas there is a growth in regard of extension; as a man or beast he may attain to his full tallness, and after that he may batten and spread more: so in grace, a mans grace may spread more afterwards, and yet possibly not so intense in regard of some affections, as it was at the first. Now a Fountain or Spring that hath but one stream, and afterwards that one stream be divided in many streams; if an unskilful man look upon it, he saith, How comes this to pass, that this Fountain is dried up? here was a full stream before, and now there is not. But now saith a skilful man that stands by him, Now there are many streams, and so there is rather the more water, now it is divided into more streams. And so it is in regard of grace; at the first a mans grace doth run out much in one chanel, afterwards it is divided into

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into more streams, and it spread more; yet notwithstanding, those that are weak, because they do not finde so full a stream in the same chanel as before, though there be many streams now that there were not before, they question all, and they say they are abated, and they are declin'd, and they have lost their first love.

But again, whereas thou sayst it is not now with thee as it was before; I say to thee, poor doubting heart, wherever thou art or standest, I say unto thee from the Lord, Thou hast more now then thou hadst before; as thus: for suppose a childe that heretofore served his father for wages, and doth now serve out of love, and not for wages, it may be he doth not do so much work as he did before, yet I say to you, If he doth but halt so much out of love, he doth more then he did before when he wrought for wages; now the work is more out of love to God: heretofore you were much grieved and troubled for sin committed, and you were therefore grieved, that your sin might be pardoned; I but now you grieve for your sin because it is pardoned: I tell you, One tear from you of these Gospel-tears, are more then a bottle-full of all those legal tears that you had before, man or woman, and therefore there is no reason why thou shouldst be dejected, and say thus, I am declin'd, and I have lost my first love, and I do not grow in grace, and therefore I never had any truth of grace at all.

Quest. But you will say unto me then, If a man may grow and increase in grace, and yet think that he is decreased; what certain Signes are there, whereby a man may know that he doth grow in grace, and that he doth abound yet more and more?

Belo.

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Beloved, I shall not give you any negative signs, but I shall make mention of some things, which if you have, and can find, you may certainly say, you are grown in Grace. But mistake not, I do not say, that if you do not find these, that therefore you should conclude that you are not grown. I come rather to comfort and to lift up the weary Soul, then to trouble it: but, I say, If you do find these, you are certainly grown in Grace.

Ans. 1. First, The great work of the Gospel it is to believe; and if you can rely more upon Christ in the time of your temptations then heretofore, surely you are grown in Grace.

If you do find again a greater sweetness in the ways of God, then you have found heretofore, certainly you are grown: when we come and look upon a flower, we look at the colour of the flower, and the smell of the flower; but the Bee doth not regard the colour of the flower, or the smell of the flower, but the Bee regards the sweetness of the flower: so at our first coming into the ways of God, then we look at the colour, and how they appear; but afterwarde, the more Grace you have, the more sweetness you find; and if you find more sweetness, certainly you are grown more.

Again, If that you are more able to turn from the exercise of one Grace to another, and of one Duty unto another, then you were, this argues you are grown, if you be able to mingle Graces together: a weak Christian is all for one work, humiliation for sin committed, and it's true, we ought to be much humbled: I say, a weak Christian is all for one work, but the stronger you

grow

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grow, the more you will be able to mingle Graces together, and to turn from one to another. As now, if one learn to sing, when one hath but little skill, possibly a man may sing one tune; but the more a man grows in skill, the more he will be able readily to turn from one tune to another. So in Grace, a man may be able to mingle Graces more; and therefore our growth is so described, as you shall hear by and by in that of Peter, *Add unto your Faith vertue, and to vertue knowledge, &c.*

Again, If you be able to go on in the ways of God more, without whip, or rod, or without spur, it argues you are grown more; give me leave to express it thus: A Horse at the first, till he be acquainted with the Rode and way, he is ridden with a whip and with a spur; but afterwards when he is well used to the way, you may lay the Bridle upon his head, and he need none of the spur and whip; why? because he is now used to the way: and so when Christians come on at the first, then they are whipt on with more fear; but now when the reins seem to be laid upon the neck, they go the better and the faster: when they can go without that whipping and the rod, it argues that they are used more to the way of God, then they were used before.

But further, the more a man is able to go out unto others for counsel, spiritual admonition, consolation, or reprehension, the more he is grown, and he will grow in Grace.

I'll propound you a Parable: suppose three men that are sick and weak; one is extream ill, and the Physitian comes to his bed-side, and he spies in the Physitians face, and will take nothing.

Ano-

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Another man he doth not deal so by the Physician, he lies upon his bed, but he cannot stir off his bed; he lies upon his bed, and he hears the counsel of the Physician, and he takes his advice.

A third man he is weak indeed, but he is able to go abroad, and he goes to the Physicians house for his counsel and direction. I pray, which of all these three men are the most healthy? surely, you will say, the latter is more healthy then the second, and the second more then the third. Beloved, there are these three sorts of people; one that when spiritual Physick is brought to them, they spit in the Physicians face, and they will have none. Others they are not so bad, but yet notwithstanding they keep their beds, as it were, and do not go forth for counsel.

But there is a third sort of sinners, that finding their souls ill at ease, they can go forth for counsel, and go out for admonition, and go out for reprehension. It may be that all these three conditions have past over some of you: you can remember the time when you did kick and fling, and spit in the Physicians face, as it were, and you would none at all; afterwards you lay more still, but yet sate, and did not stir out: I but now you are able God be thanked to go out to the Physician, or to such and such Saints, and to open your condition before them; Oh thus it's with me, Oh thus it's with me! come, lay on some Admonition, or lay on some healing Plaster, some Reprehension, some Consolation; good Sir pitie me; and the like. Now this argues more health then before.

Again; the more you are able to do the work
C of

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of the Lord without noise, the more doth it argue that you are grown in grace. Beloved, Jesus Christ was a perfect workman, and did the work of the Lord perfectly, and he made no noise; it is said of him, *that he did not lift up his voice in the streets.* Young Christians make a great noise in the work of God: one he cries out, Oh I am damn'd, I am damn'd! and another cries out after the same kind, Oh I am damn'd, I am damn'd! and wring their hands in the family, and make a great noise when there is a work of God upon their hearts; like to your young Scholars, when first of all they learn their books, they read with a great noise: afterwards, when they are grown men, and read better, they read silent, and make no noise. So now I say, Thou man or woman, art thou able to do the work of the Lord in a more silent and sweet Gospel-way then heretofore thou didst? this argues that thou art more grown then thou wert heretofore.

And further, if you know Christ more, you are grown more; the Apostle puts them both together: *Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.*

But take one more. If that you do as much as before, and deny your doing more then you did before, then you are grown in grace. One man doth much, and denies himself little; another doth much, and denies himself much: who hath most grace of these two? The husband-man will tell you, that when the ear of corn is not so ripe, it stands bolt-upright; but when it's more ripe, then it hangs down its head, and looks to the earth: and so heretofore it may be you were much in prayer, and in duty, you wept much; and

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and it was well that you were much in duty and humiliation for sin; but it may be then you rested upon your duties, and denied your self little. I but now you are as much, but you have seen more of the free grace of God, and the love of God in Christ, and now you deny your duties more, and rest less upon them then you did; this is a growth now; and where these things are, you may conclude that you are grown. And I say to every soul here, Is there any one that doth finde these things? thou art the man or woman that doth grow in grace, and doth increase; therefore be of good comfort, thou art not declining, thou art not abated, thou hast truth of grace, thou hast growth of grace.

Quest. I but whether I have or I have not, you will say, surely it is my duty to have; and what shall I do that I may grow in grace? I hope the Lord hath begun savingly upon my heart; but what shall I do that I may abound yet more and more, and increase in grace?

I must not be large here; give me leave to say some things to you.

Ans. First of all, observe what those ways of God are, unto which he hath promised increase; and Oh let your feet be found standing there: he hath promised to those that exercise: *To him that bath shall be given.* It is opposed to *laying up the talent in a napkin.*

He hath promised increase to those that wait upon him: *Those that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.*

He hath promised increase to those whose feet stand in the courts of the house of the Lord; in *Psal. 92. 12. The righteous shall flourish like a palm-*

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tree, and shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon: those that be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God. And so in Psal. 84. 4. Blessed are they that dwell in thine house, they will be still praising thee. They that dwell in thine house they will be still praising thee.

Quest. But suppose that a mans feet do not stand in the court of the Lords house, suppose a man be not planted in the house of the Lord, can he not grow in grace?

Ans. Yes: mark what follows in vers. 5, 6, 7. all growth of grace is not instal'd upon one condition: *Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee.* He had said before, *Blessed are those that dwell in thy house*: but suppose a man be driven out, and cannot dwell in Gods house, shall he not be blessed, and shall he not grow? *Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee, and in whose heart are the ways of them, who passing through the valley of Baca, make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools: they go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.* They may grow too; but then it's upon these three Conditions.

1. The ways of God must be in their hearts: *In whose heart are the ways of them.*

2. They must look upon that condition as a valley of Baca, a mourning valley, vers. 6.

3. Thirdly, they must be abundant in private duty and exercise, digging up of pits; and then the rain falls, and fills those pits; and thus they shall go from strength to strength. But the great increase is promised to those whose feet do stand in the court of the house of the Lord.

Again, would you know how you may grow in grace? Beloved, let your eye be stedfast upon the

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the greater and higher matters and objects of the Gospel. The Apostle for this end doth lay the great things of the Gospel before the people, and prays for them, that they may be filled with all the fulness of God. But I pray see what an expression he hath in 2 Cor. 9. 8. And God (saith he) is able to make all grace abound towards you, that ye always having all sufficiency in all things. All-sufficiency is a great attribute of God: they have it in a kinde; That ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work. Mark what great things he lays here before them. And if you look into chap. 6. of the Epistle to the Hebrews, vers. 6. you shall finde that the Apostle gives this plain direction that now I am upon for our growing in grace, and perfecting holiness in the fear of God: Therefore (saith he) leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, &c. Good people, mark; Let us go on to perfection: how? not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works. Some there are that are always laying the foundation, and all their life they are questioning whether their work were right at the first or no: Oh I am afraid I was never truly humbled at the first: their whole life is nothing but a laying of the foundation-work: why saith the Apostle, Let us go on to perfection, &c. Be not always in this work of laying the foundation, if you would go on to perfection. And as for my self, saith he, I go this way to work, as you may read in chap. 3. of this Epistle to the Philippians: Brethren, I count not my self to have apprehended, but this one thing: forgetting those things which are behind, and reach-

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ing forth to those things which are before, I press towards the mark. Mark, it's a similitude taken from those that run in a Race: saith he, I do as those that run in a Race; they stretch out their bodies towards the Price, so do I: and, saith he, as it is with those that run in a Race, they do not go backward for to measure the ground that they have gone over, but they forget what is past, and press on to that which is before: so now do I, I forget that which is past, not onely so as not to rest upon it, but I forget what is past, I am not always laying the foundation of the doctrine of repentance from dead works, but I press on to that which is before. And so, would you be perfect, and would you grow, let your eyes be upon those things that are before.

Again, if you would grow in grace, cut off all those superfluties that grow out of your heart, and give up your selves wholly to the Word of the Lord in this world. If you would have a tree grow, you slip off the lesser sprigs that grow out of the sides; they will hinder the growth, you will say: so saith the Apostle; *Wherefore laying aside all filthiness, and superfluity of naughtiness, receive with meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls.* James 1. 21.

But again, if you would grow in grace, and abound yet more and more, observe what gifts or graces God hath given you, and labour to improve them. Beloved, God doth give some gift or special grace to every Christian, and that gift or grace is as a Spade or Shovel to dig out more out of the Mines of Christ. Every bird hath its bill, and by the bill it doth take in its meat, whereby it grows; and every Christian hath one
gift

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gift or another whereby he doth excel: and with that gift or grace you should now go unto Jesus Christ, who is the great Ordinance, and fetch out more. Observe, I say, what that gift and grace is, and labour to improve it more and more.

I will say no more in this; but if you would grow in grace, studie much of the love of Jesus Christ: and you shall finde that these two are put together by the Apostle, in *Ephes. 3.* For this cause (saith he) I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c. that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all Saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Mark how these go together: the more you see the love of Christ, the more you will love God; and the more you love him, the more you will obey him, and the more abundant you will be in the work of the Lord. Therefore as ye desire to grow, study the free love of God in Jesus Christ, and hereby you will be able to grow and to abound yet more and more. And that you may do it, give me leave to speak here a little by way of encouragement hereunto, and so I will winde up all.

Beloved in the Lord, when you hear of Gods blessing any in Scripture, he saith, *Increase and multiply.* So then, the more you do increase in grace, the more your gifts and graces multiply, the more you do carry up and down with you a testimony of the Lords blessing upon you.

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Besides, herein you glorifie God the Father: *Herein is my Father glorified, (saith Christ) in that ye bring forth much fruit.* 'Tis the glory of the husband-man, that the tree bring forth much; 'tis the glory of God the Father that ye bring forth much, that ye abound more and more.

And the more and greater our opportunities are, and means of growth, the more are we all encouraged for to grow in grace. Let me appeal to you a little; have not your opportunities and means for growth been great here?

Communion of Saints it is a great means for to grow in grace. Here you have time, here many Saints meet together; and in poor Country-towns, possibly a poor Christian may travel three or four miles before he can meet with one that may refresh his thoughts: here you have the opportunities which you have not in other places. Communion of Saints, standing in the courts of the house of the Lord, is a great means for to grow in grace.

Preaching of the Gospel, and the Word of Gods grace, is a special and great means of growth: it's call'd the rain of plenty, or the plentiful rain. It is a true speech, *It is the year, and not the soyl, that doth make the fruit*: if the rain falls seasonably, and the sun shines seasonably, then you have fruit. Now Beloved, I appeal to you; have you not had a fine time of it here? have you not had a sweet season of Gospel-preaching amongst you? The Lord knows what plentiful rain hath fallen upon you: Oh, great engagements are upon you all for to grow in grace; and if you, this people, shall not after all your engagements this way, and opportuni-
ties

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ties to grow ; if you shall not grow in grace, Oh how will you appear before God your Father at the great day ! how, how will you give an account of those talents that you have had ? We read of him that had but one talent, he wrapt it up in a napkin ; but the Parable speaks there were five left, and two left ; but it is not said that he that had the five, or the two, wrapt them up in a napkin ; but he that had but the one talent, he wrapt it up, and you know what became of him ; but now when those that have five talents shall wrap them up in a napkin, Oh what will become of them ! Beloved, you have not had the one talent, you have not had the two talents ; you have had the five talents : and if there was such a miserable end of him that wrapt up his one talent, O what will become of us that have five talents, and wrap them up, and do not improve them ! You know what the Lord Christ said to the Church of Ephesus, how he threatened that Church : *I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast lost thy first love : remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place.* God knows whether your first love be not lost, or no : I am sure the Lord hath taken away a burning and a shining light from among you : and certainly, if you do not grow and thrive under all those opportunities of grace, and growth in grace that you have had, and still have ; how soon the Lord may quite remove his Candlestick from you, and leave you quite in the dark, he only knows. Wherefore, Beloved in the Lord, you have received much, Oh much is expected from you, much is

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is expected from you. And let me tell you for your encouragement; If you do grow in grace, and abound in the work of the Lord, then shall there be an abundant entrance given unto you into the everlasting inheritance.

And so I come to that place of Peter, which I shall but open before you, and so have done for this time; and I pray consider it diligently.

2 Pet. 1. 5. And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith vertue; and to vertue knowledge. But

mark how he prefaces before he comes to the words: *Whereby* (saith he) *are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lusts.*

Now besides this, there is something else to be done: well, what's that? it is such a matter, as all diligence is to be given to it: *Besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith vertue.* 'Tis

not, 'tis not enough that you believe, but you must have moral vertue also: *Add unto your faith vertue.* I but suppose we have moral vertue, is not that enough? No; *and to your vertue knowledge.* You must not onely have moral vertues,

but you must know Jesus Christ. But suppose he hath knowledge, is not that yet enough? No; *and to your knowledge add temperance,* whereby you may be kept from the immoderate use of the things of this world. But suppose we have that,

is not that enough? No; *add to your temperance patience:* you shall meet with many afflictions and crosses, and therefore you must have patience. But suppose we have patience, is not that yet enough? No; *and to your patience add godliness:* there must be a right worshipping of God

in his Service. Well, but suppose we have godliness, and do worship God after a right manner, is not that enough? No; *adde to your godliness brotherly kindnes*: you that are Saints are brethren, and therefore it is not enough that ye have the worshipping of God in a right way, but ye must agree together as brethren; *adde to your right worship and godliness brotherly kindnes*. But suppose we have that, is not that enough? no; *adde charity*: brotherly kindness may be towards you that are brethren, but there must be charity towards all, to those that are not of the body. Well, but suppose we do these things, what then? Read vers 8. *For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ*. You complain that your hearts are barren, and that you lie as barren ground in the Family: why if you would not be barren and unfruitful, you must grow, and adde one grace unto another; *And if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful*. Well, but suppose a man lack these things; read vers 9. *But he that lacketh these things is blinde, and cannot see afar off*: he may see some things in Religion that are neer, but those things that are afar off he is blinde in them, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins, that is, by Baptism. But suppose we do all this, what then? Pray see what encouragement there is to this in vers. 10. *Wherefore the rather brethren give diligence to make your calling and election sure*: this will be a signe to you of your election. *And if you do these things, you shall never fall*. Whereas those that are weak, and do not grow in grace, they

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they stumble at all occasions ; but if you do these things, ye shall never fall, and not stumble as those that are weak do. And yet further, at vers. 11. you shall not onely have this benefit for the present, but for the future : for so an entrance shall be ministred unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Do you abound in grace, and grow in grace, and are rich in grace ? Why look as you abound, so there shall be an abundant entrance ministred to you into the everlasting kingdom. Wherefore (he saith) I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things. It may be you will tell me you knew these things before ; but mark vers. 12. I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things ; though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. Yea, at vers. 13. I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance. And that you may see that it is a matter of great concernment, he doth not onely say that he would put them in remembrance as long as he lived, but he would take some course when he was dead that this exhortation should be pressed upon them ; at vers. 15. Moreover, I will endeavour that you may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance. Oh therefore what a necessity is there that we should grow in grace ! Wherefore Brethren and Beloved in the Lord, as you have been exhorted not onely by me at this time, but by others of Gods servants : so now labour to abound in all well pleasing, to abound yet more and more. And for me, I shall say to you, and concerning you, as the Apostle in Philip. 1. This I pray, that your love
may

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may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in
all judgement, that ye may approve things that are
excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence
till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of
righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory
and praise of God.



The





The first and last in Suffering-work.

S E R M. II.

Matth. 29. ult.

But many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first.

AT vers. 27. Peter doth propound a question unto Christ, saying, *Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee: what shall we have therefore?*

Jesus answered him in the following verse; and his answer is partly comfortable, and partly cautional.

In the comfortable part, he doth declare what great reward his disciples or any other should have, that did suffer, or leave any worldly interest for his Name-sake.

The first part concerns the disciples onely, in vers. 28. *I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. This shall be your reward.*

And as for others, though you make the question, I'll give my answer so (saith he) as shall con-

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concern more then you : my promise shall be extended unto others also ; at vers. 29. **And EVERY ONE** that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my Names sake, shall receive an hundred-fold : Here's their reward, an hundred-fold. It is a very great improvement. We account Ten in the Hundred a great matter ; and if Merchants can venture to Sea, and gain Twelve or Ten in the Hundred, and be Insured of so great a gain, they account it a great matter : but here's an hundred-fold : not Ten or Twelve, but an hundred for one ; and this insur'd too : *Verily I say unto you* (saith Christ) *every one that hath forsaken, &c. shall receive an hundred-fold.*

And as for the cautionall part, that follows at vers. 30. *But many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first.*

Wherein he doth give a Caveat, not onely unto his disciples, but unto all those that should suffer, and forsake any worldly interest upon his account. As if he should say thus ; 'Tis true, you have indeed left all to follow me ; thereupon you ask me what you shall have ; and I lay before you very great rewards : but I would have you for to walk warily, and to take heed how you walk in the matter of your sufferings : for though you suffer for my Name-sake, and though those that do so in truth shall have very great rewards, an hundred-fold in this life ; yet many that are very forward, shall appear to be backward ; and many that are backward, shall appear to be forward ; and many that stand behinde, they shall stand before ; and many that stand before, they shall be set behinde : *The first shall be last, and the last*

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last shall be first. Which being spoken in reference unto suffering, and forsaking of our worldly interest for the Name of Christ; the Doctrine then is this :

That many that are first shall be last, and many that are last shall be first, in suffering-work.

For the clearing whereof, there were four things propounded.

1. First, what it is for a man to be first that is last, and to be last that is first.

2. Secondly, how it may appear that many that are first shall be last, and many that are last shall be first in suffering-work.

3. Thirdly, how and in what respect that is true.

4. Fourthly, what are the Reasons on't.

And then the Application.

First, what is it for one that is first to be last, and one that is last to be first? what's this?

Some think this is to be understood in regard of the sameness of reward; as if Christ had said thus: The first shall be as the last, and the last shall be as the first, in matter of reward. And for this, they have the next Parable to shew, where this same speech is brought in: *A certain householder went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard, and agreed with the labourers for a penny a day: and he hired some at the first hour, and some at the last; and those that came in at the last, received a penny as the first did.* Whereupon the first they grumbled. The Master answered, *vers. 15. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? is thine eye evil, because I am good? So the last shall be first, and the first last.* Why? because the last had the same penny. As if the meaning of this therefore should be thus much, That there

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there should be the same reward given to the one as to the other. But this cannot be the meaning on't: for it is not true; for there shall not be the same reward given to all; some shall have more then others, some shall have greater degrees of glory then others.

If there be degrees of torments in hell, then there are degrees of glory in heaven. There are degrees of torment in hell; for Christ hath said, *He that knoweth his Masters will, and doth it not, shall be beaten with MANY stripes, with more stripes then those that are ignorant, and know it not.* Now if there be degrees of torment in hell, there are degrees of glory in heaven: and therefore the thing is not true, That there shall be the same reward.

And here in chap. 19. we see, that the Apostles are set higher in their reward: *When the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, YE also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

And our Saviour Christ here, he doth not speak universally, nor indefinitely: he doth not say that ALL that are first shall be last, and ALL that are last shall be first; neither doth he speak definitely, *The first shall be last, and the last first*: but he speaks thus, *That MANY that are first, he doth not say ALL that are first shall be last; neither doth he say indefinitely, The first shall be last, but, MANY that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first.* That's the meaning then.

Others think therefore the meaning is this, and the words are to be understood in reference to mens conceit and opinion: as if he should say, Be not conceited; for though ye suffer much, and

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for sake a great deal for me, and for my Name-sake; yet many that are first in their own conceit, shall be last; and many that are last in their own opinion and conceit, shall be first. This is true; but this is not all the meaning.

Therefore we must know, that a person or thing is said to be first or last; in regard of time, or in regard of dignity or chiefdom.

In regard of time: so we say the last day is the first day of the week; first, in regard of time.

2. Secondly; in regard of chiefdom; and so Paul saith, *Whereof I am chief.* In the Original it is, *This is a true saying, that Christ came into the world to save sinners, whereof I am the FIRST;* but we read it *chief*, because the *chief* is the *first*. First is put for *chief* in Scripture-language; and so 'tis true, many, many that are first in religion, ancient professors, shall be last at suffering for the Name of Christ, when it comes to't; and many that are last in religion, novices in religion, lately brought in, shall be the first in suffering for the Cause, and for the Name of Jesus Christ. And so, many that are chief, and of great esteem in the world, that are first in esteem, shall be last at suffering-work; and many that are last in esteem, and of no account, shall be first to suffer for the Name of Jesus Christ.

Secondly; a thing is said to be in Scripture, when 'tis declared to be, when it appears to be. So in *Act 13.* speaking concerning the resurrection of Christ, *According as it is written, This day have I begotten thee.* Why this day have I begotten thee? why was Christ begotten that day, the day of his resurrection? Christ was the eternal Son of God; how is this, *This day have I begotten thee,*

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thee, to prove the resurrection? The Apostle explains it in Rom. 1. 4. by the resurrection he was mightily **DECLARED** to be the Son of God. So that in Scripture-phrase, a thing is said to be, when it is declar'd to be, and appears to be. And accordingly now, many that are first, that appear to be first, shall in due time appear to be last in suffering-work; and many that appear to be last, shall in due time appear to be first in suffering-work for the Cause of Christ, and for the Name of Christ.

Thus now in the general we hear what this means: more particularly afterwards.

But secondly, how may it appear that many that are first shall be last, and many that are last shall be first in suffering-work, suffering for the Name of Christ? (For I am not now speaking of the thing at large, that many that are first shall be last, and many that are last shall be first, in the general, but in reference only to suffering.) How may that appear? Thus:

'Tis in the *suffering* part of Religion, as in the *doing* part. In the *doing* part of Religion, many that are first shall be last: many that are great men in duty, and of great abilities and gifts, shall be last; and many that are last, and weak, and low in grace, that you would think had no grace at all, shall be first. 'Tis said so in the next Chapter, in the Parable: there 'tis spoken in regard of *doing*; here in this Scripture 'tis spoken in regard of *suffering*. Now in regard of *doing*, so it is (I say).

Is it not a great matter for a man to frequent the Ordinances with delight; to believe, and to repent, and to preach, and to prophesie, and do

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many wonderful works, casting out devils in the Name of Christ? All these things in some sense a man may do, and yet may fall short of heaven.

Possibly a man may attend upon the Ordinances with delight. In *Isa. 58*. *Ye delight in approaching to me, ye unsound, hypocrites.*

Possibly a man may in some measure believe, and yet be unsound. 'Tis said of *Simon Magus*, that he himself also believed, in the *Acts*.

Possibly a man may repent in some sense, and yet be unsound. 'Tis said of *Judas*, in *Mat. 27*. when he saw what became of Christ, he repented himself, and carried the money again.

And in *Matth. 7*. they say, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy Name, and cast out devils in thy Name, and done many wonderful works in thy Name? And yet Christ shall say at last, *Depart, I never knew you.* So that many men go very far in the doing part of Religion, and yet fall short of heaven. If then, the first may be last in the doing part of Religion, why should it be a thing incredible to us, that the first may be last in the suffering part?

The second demonstration of it, to clear it, is this:

If a man may spoil and lose all his former sufferings by his after-sins; and if a man may recover, repair, recompence his former backwardness to suffer, by his after-faith and grace; then presently the last may be first, and the first may be last in point of suffering. So it is.

Possibly a man may lose all his former sufferings by his after-sins: *Foolish Galatians!* (saith the Apostle) *have ye suffered so many things in vain, if yet in vain?* They fell from the doctrine of grace,

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grace, to justification by works; and they lost all their sufferings by their after-sins.

On the other side, *Nicodemus* was very backward to come to Christ; he came by night; he was afraid to suffer: yet afterwards, when Christ died, he owned Christ openly: and the Holy-ghost sets a mark upon it, in *Joh. 18. This is that Nicodemus which came to Jesus by night.* He did recompence his former backwardness to suffer, by his after-faith. So that a man may lose his former sufferings by his after-sins; and a man may recover and recompence his former backwardness to sufferings, by his after-faith and grace.

Thirdly, If a man may be a famous Preacher of the Gospel, and lose much upon that account, and yet prove an Apostate, a persecutor of the Gospel; and if a man may be a notorious persecutor of the Gospel, and yet afterwards prove a famous Preacher of the Gospel, and suffer much upon that account: Then possibly the first may be last, and the last may be first in point of suffering. So it is, that a man may be a famous Preacher of the Gospel, and lose much upon that account; and yet afterwards prove an Apostate, a persecutor. So it was with *Judas*. When Christ sent forth his disciples, saying, *Take no purse, nor scrip, &c.* *Judas* was among them, and left his purse, &c. and was no doubt a famous Minister; yet after, he became a most notorious persecutor, and headed the party that came to take Jesus.

And always (as you may observe) the persecutors are headed with some Apostate; they have some Apostate in the head of them.

And on the other side, who doth not know what a notorious persecutor *Paul* was! insomuch

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as he saith upon that score, that he was the least of all the Apostles, because he persecuted the Church of God: and yet who doth not know what a famous Preacher of the Gospel he was, and suffered much upon that score! So then, the thing lies clear and plain, That possibly the last may be first, and the first may be last, in point of suffering.

Thirdly, *How and in what respect is this true?*

First, it's true in regard of priviledges and enjoyments: many that are first in regard of priviledges and enjoyments, shall be last at the work of suffering for Christ; and many that are last in priviledges and enjoyments, shall be first in the work of suffering for Christ.

Many that are first in priviledges and enjoyments, shall be last in suffering. Here's a young man comes to Christ, and Christ loved him; and he saith unto Christ, *What shall I do to inherit eternal life?* Keep the commandments, saith Christ. I have done it, saith he. I but saith Christ, *One thing thou lackest; go sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and come and follow me, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven.* And saith the text, *He went away sorrowful, for he had a great estate;* he was rich, he was a priviledged man, and he had great enjoyments, for he was a rich man; and yet notwithstanding he was the most backward for to leave all for Christ.

On the other side, *the poor receive the Gospel:* and as the poor do receive the Gospel, so they hold it, and keep it, and suffer for it. So that 'tis true then in regard of priviledges and enjoyments.

Secondly, this is true in regard of abilities: many that are first in regard of ability, shall be last

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last in suffering for Christ; and many that are last in abilities, shall be first in suffering for the Name of Jesus Christ.

Many that are first in Abilities: so the disciples, when Christ said to them, *Are ye able to drink of the cup that I am to drink of? and are ye able to be baptized with the baptism that I am to be baptized with?* Yea Lord (say they) *we are able.* But when Christ came to suffer, 'tis said, *They all forsook him and fled.* First, in point of abilities; and last, in point of suffering. But Mary, and a company of weak women, cleaved unto Christ, and followed him to the very last: the first were last, and the last were first. And look into the Book of Martyrs: where do you finde the Martyrs growing? do you finde them growing upon Universities? Few were Scholars and Doctors that were Martyrs, but growing in Country towns and Villages. So 'tis said of Origen, that when he was a young man, about sixteen or seventeen years old, his mother was fore'd to hide his very Shift from him, so that he was ashamed to go into the streets; for otherwise he would have gone to have suffer'd Martyrdom. But afterwards, when he came to be a great Doctor, then he offered to the Idols; inso much as they cryed out, *Origen hath sacrificed!* While he was weak and young, very forward to suffer: when he was grown strong, and had abilities, then backward. *The last shall be first, and the first shall be last.*

Thirdly, this is true also in regard of *action*, professional action. Many that are first in profession, and of great performance, shall be last in suffering for the Name of Christ. And many that have not been of so great profession, and such

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high performance, shall suffer when it comes to it; they shall suffer for the Name of Christ. You have an instance in the Parable of the stony ground; it receives the Word with joy: yet notwithstanding, when tribulation and persecution arise because of the Word, by and by they are offended. So they were high, and first in profession, yea action too, and yet the last in suffering.

So on the other side, you know the stories there that go together: a certain man comes to Christ, and saith, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. Saith Christ, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not whereon to lay his head. Then Christ comes to another, and saith to him, Follow me. Lord, saith he, I must go bury my father. Why let the dead bury their dead. What's the meaning of this, but to shew thus much, That the first shall be last, and the last shall be first, in forsaking their worldly interests for Christ, and for the Name of Christ?

Fourthly, this is true also in point of Resolution: many that are first in resolving to suffer, shall be last to suffer when it comes to; and many that are last in resolving, shall be first in suffering. Lord (saith Peter) though all men forsake thee, yet will not I. Bravely resolved I but though he was first in the resolve, yet he was first in forsaking Christ. The cock shall not crow before thou deny me. And you know how it was with those * Pendleton * two in the Book of Martyrs: the one was a very fat man, and he would burn, his grease should fry in the fire for the Name of Christ: the other was a lean man, and he cries out, Ob I am afraid I shall never hold out! But

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But when it came to, the lean man was the Martyr, and the fat man would not burn. So that that is true in the point of Resolution.

And true it is also in the point of Indurance and pain in the work of suffering. And in that, many that are first in the work of suffering, shall be last in the reward; and many that are last in the work of suffering, shall be first in the reward. 1 Cor. 13. 3. *Though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burnt, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.* Possibly a man may give his goods to the poor, part with his worldly interest to the poor, and give his body to be burnt, and yet want love. So then, the first in the very work of suffering, may be last in the reward: 'tis true in that respect. And so I have done with that.

But then in the fourth place, what's the reason of this, and how comes this to pass, that many that are first shall be last, and many that are last shall be first in suffering-work? There are two Reasons for it.

The first is drawn from God and his grace.

The second is drawn from our selves and sufferings.

The first is drawn from God and his grace, thus: 'Tis Gods ordinary way in his dealings with his creatures, to set those things and persons before, that do stand behinde; and those behinde, that do stand before. As in Printing, you don't take the letters and place that first that is first in the Alphabet, but that which is first in the Word; as in zeal, z is the first, but it's the last in the Alphabet. And so God in writing down the names of men in the Book of life, he writes
down

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down them that stand behinde ; the last letter first, and the first letter last. See it for instance.

When the Lord had to deal with Men and Angels, which was the first in the Creation ? The Angels they were the elder brother to Man, they stood first : but when Men and Angels had fallen, God he redeems Man, and sets him before, that stood behinde ; and takes the fallen Angels, and sets them behinde, that were first in the Creation ; sets them behinde, and Man that was behinde, he is brought before. So when God would take a people to himself, what people did God take to be his people ? A poor, forlorn, despised people, The people of the Jews ; and past over all the glorious Nations of the world.

And when God would take a family out of that people, what family did he take ? The family of Jesse. And when he would take a particular person, what person was it ? David the younger brother, that stood behinde, and was among the sheep: he that stood behind was brought before, and he that stood before was set behind. That for the time of the Old Testament.

So in the time of the New Testament ; the Jew stands first, he had the hanel of the Market, he had the hanel of the Gospel ; Christ was born of them after the flesh ; they had the Oracles of God ; they stood first : the Gentiles stood behinde ; they called them dogs : *'Tis not meet to take the childrens bread and cast it to dogs.* Well, these Gentiles that stood behinde, they are brought before ; and the Jews that stood before, they are set behinde.

And what Nation did God take out of the Gentiles ? did he take any great continent in

America,

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America, where the Gold and the Silver is? No, but the Isles shall wait for thy law: and, the inhabitants of Kedar shall rejoyce, and the inhabitants of the rocks shall sing.

And when God would convert these, whom did he make use of to do it? He makes use of Paul, Paul the last of all the Apostles: the twelve Apostles they stood first: but he that stood behind, that was brought in last, that was born out of time, he is taken to do the work.

And who are they that are converted to him? They are babes and sucklings: not many wise, not many noble, but babes and sucklings. Even so, Father, because thou art so pleased. This is the ordinary way of God: he takes those things that stand behind, and brings them before; and takes those things that stand before, and sets them behind. And why doth he do so? Why

Because he will shew mercy to whom he will shew mercy: whom he will, he shews mercy unto; and whom he will he hardens: and he orders things in such a way, that no flesh may glory. 1 Cor. 1. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen; yea and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are. Why? That no flesh should glory in his presence, v. 29. God will carry things in such a way, as no flesh may glory, either in their doings, or in their sufferings. And how will he order it then? Therefore, the first shall be last, and the last shall be first, both in doing, and in suffering; that no flesh may glory, but that grace may be all in all. Whom
he

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he will bestow mercy to, and whom he will he hardens. This is the first Reason; drawn from God himself, and from his grace.

The second Reason is drawn from our selves, and from our sufferings; and it lies thus:

If there be a great deal of suffering that will come to little; and if there be a little suffering that will amount to much, and come to much: then many that are last shall be first, and the first shall be last, in point of suffering.

Now so it is, that there is a great deal of suffering which will come to little, come to little account. *Judas* left all; and it came to little. *Alexander* drawn out of the croud in suffering for Christ; and it came to little: *Alexander the copper-smith* did me much evil; the Lord reward him according to his works. His sufferings came to little. The poor Christians that are taken slaves by the Turks, they lie in slavery ten years together, rather then they will renounce the Christian Religion: yet when they come out, O what drunkards, and swearers, and enemies to God, and such as have nothing of Christ in them! O they suffer much, but it comes to little; they shall not be sav'd. So that I say there is a great deal of suffering that will come to little.

On the other side, there is a little suffering that will amount to much. A cup of cold water shall have its reward; the wite that the poor woman gave, more then all the rest, saith our Saviour. 'Twas no great matter that *Onesiphorus* suffered for Paul: saith Paul, *Onesiphorus* was not ashamed of my chains; he sought me out diligently, and oft refreshed my bowels. The Lord shew mercy to the household of *Onesiphorus*. It was no great mat-

ter

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ter that he suffered, but it did amount to much.

But you will say, How can this be, that there should be a great deal of suffering that will amount to little, and a little suffering that will amount to much?

Both ways I answer.

First, if you ask how it can be that a great deal of sufferings should come to little;

I answer first, 'tis possible that a man may lose, that he may gain. I am a Minister, and have a Living; and I may lose my Living possibly, that I may get a livelihood another way. I may suffer, and go to prison, that I may be maintain'd. I do not reflect upon any particular, but only to shew the deceitfulness of our hearts in such a case.

And who doth not know, that a man may suffer from a natural boldness and courage; and that he may suffer by crowding in among good people that are in a suffering way?

And who doth not know, that a man may suffer upon the strength of education? As a Turk, a Jew, a Papist, a Protestant, may suffer in the Religion that they are educated and brought up in.

And who knows not that a man may suffer very much in a way of merit? It is recorded of one, that he invited a friend of his to dinner, that so he might shew unto him his Hounds. And when he came, he shewed unto him a company of poor people, and said unto him, *These are my Hounds with which I do hunt for heaven.* In a way of merit he speaks. And we see how it is with a Horse or a Cow in pasture that is eaten down; if

there

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there be herbs or pleasant flowers growing in the ditch that's full of water, the Horse or Cow will reach, and reach many times so far, that it falls into the ditch. Truly there are many fine flowers grow in the suffering ditch, and many an unsound heart may reach so far, till it falls into the ditch. As it's possible that a man may tread a great deal of ground, and never come to his journey's end: so 'tis possible a man may tread a great deal of suffering ground, and never come to heaven; for there's a great deal of dross cleaving to our best sufferings.

In a suffering time, then we are apt to be very froward, and to be impatient, and to dwell more upon our own pleasures, than upon God's dishonour.

Secondly, in suffering times, then we are very apt to forget our former experiences, and to be unthankful for our present mercies.

Thirdly, in suffering times we are very apt to boggle at the dispensation, to fall foul upon infirmities, & to complain of God's dealings with us, and not of our own unworthy dealings with God.

Fourthly, in suffering times we are very apt to look to the smart of our sufferings, and not to the cause, or else to pick upon the wrong cause.

Fifthly, in suffering times we are very apt to wish that we had never begun in the work of God. As Joshua and the Elders, when they smarted before the men of Ai, *Would to God we had layd on the other side Jordan,* (say they.) So when men meet with the smart of afflictions in the way and work of God, O then, would to God we had never meddled with the work of Reformation;

would

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would to God we had been content with our leeks and onions which we had before.

Sixthly, in suffering times we are very apt to comply and correspond with our enemies, and with Gods enemies; and to use unworthy shifts to get out of trouble: as *Abraham* did; *Say, thou art my sister.* 'Tis true, she was his sister; but she was his wife: and it was an unworthy shift for such a man as *Abraham* was.

Seventhly, in suffering times we are very apt to tempt the Lord, and to limit the holy One of *Israel*; and to say, *Can God provide a table now?* Can God provide a table for me in this wilderness? Thus there's a great deal of dross cleaves to all our sufferings, and therefore no wonder that a great deal of suffering comes to lodge in us.

And on the other side, that a little suffering may amount to much. I can give no other reason of it but this; God hath a very gracious allowance for his people. As we use to say, We bear with children when it is their weaning-time. Truly our suffering-time is our weaning-time. And God saith, Bear with such a one, 'tis his weaning-time. You have heard of the patience of *Job*. Why I have heard of *Jobs* impatience. True, but God did not measure *Job* in his wallops, but when he was cold. As we do not measure mild when it wallops and scethes, but when it is cold; so God doth not measure *Job* in his passion, but when he was off the fire, when he was cold. You say, the best Gold must have its allowance; if it want a Grain or two, it must have its allowance. So all the suffering people of God must have their allowance; and God hath a very great allowance for his suffering people; and therefore

this

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this is all the reason that I can give, why a little suffering shall go a great way. So then, put all together, and you have the Doctrine clear'd in all the particulars of it.

„ If many that are first shall be last in point of suffering; why then should we not all take heed how we suffer, look to the manner of our sufferings, look to our hearts in suffering? He's a virtuous man, that doth *what* he should, *as* he should. So he's not a true sufferer, that suffers *what* he should, but that suffers *what* he should, *as* he should. When we hear how far a man may go in Religion, and yet be unsound, and go to hell; then we should say, Good Lord, I will then look to my heart in prayer, and look to my heart in duty. So in point of suffering, if many that are first shall be last, and the last first; then I will look to my heart in suffering, if ever I be called to suffer.

„ Secondly, if that many that are first shall be last in suffering-work, why then should we not walk humbly under all our sufferings? *The first shall be last, and the last shall be first.* A man who hath prayed a prayer, or performed a duty, he should do as one that hath written a Letter; why he will read over the Letter, and then he mends it, and then he looks over the letter, and throws dust, dust, dust upon the Letter. And so a man when he hath performed any duty, he should look over his duty, and throw *dust*, I mean humility, and self-denial, upon his duties. So should we do in regard of our sufferings; if ever we be call'd to suffer, read over our sufferings, and throw dust upon our sufferings, walk humbly under

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under them : for many that are first shall be last in point of suffering.

Thirdly, why should we rest in what we suffer, and not press on to that which lies before? The life of a Christian is like the life of a man in a Cooks shop, from one work to another. Like the life of a Husbandman; he plows and he harrows, and he sows and reaps, and threshes; and he never stands still. So the life of a Christian, always at work. You know what our Saviour saith, *If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross.* What then? take a stool and sit down? No, let him take up his cross and follow me. Follow me after sufferings, not sit down and rest there. When we have done all, still press on to that which is before.

Fourthly, if many that are first shall be last in point of suffering, why should we not take heed that we don't give in if ever we be called to suffering? As it is said of the French, *They are fire at the first onset, but smoke in the issue.*

So there are many that are rate men at a Charge, and they overcome in a Skirmish; but they give in at the Battel. But is this true, that many that are first in suffering, shall be last? Oh, then why should we not take heed that we don't give in if we be call'd to suffering?

Fifthly, if this be true also, that many that are last, shall be first in the work of suffering; why should we censure or despise some that are weak, that do drag, that do come behind, that are backward (as we think) unto the work of suffering? We will not blame an Apple-tree or a Pear-tree that is winter-fruit, because it doth not come so soon as other trees that are summer-fruit?

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So there are some men that are sooner ripe for sufferings, and they are summer-fruit; others that are backward, and they are winter-fruit; they don't come so soon. The Lord hath many gusts of sufferings, and such a one may be reserved for the second, or for the third part. Now as we do not blame the tree for bringing forth so late, because it is a winter-fruit: so why should we despise some that are backward in our eyes, that hang and lag as to the business of suffering? why the first shall be last, and the last shall be first.

Sixthly, why should any be afraid, or be discouraged, because they are weak, and unfit to suffer? As many that are first shall be last, so many that are last shall be first. As there is a great deal of suffering that will come to a little, so there is a little suffering that will amount to much. Therefore though you be weak (as you think) for this suffering work, yet be not discouraged.

But you will say, I am not afraid of suffering upon this account; but I am afraid of my suffering because of my sin: for now suffering times are come, and we suffer for our sins; and can any suffering that comes by sin, turn to a good account? If I did know that my suffering should turn to a good account, I would never be afraid to suffer: but I fear my suffering will not turn to a good account, because my sufferings come by sin. Can any sufferings that come by sin turn to a good account?

Answer, Yea, through the grace of God. When the Ark was taken, were not the people in a sad condition? Yes; they lamented after the Ark twenty years. And did not that condition come by their sin? Yes. Did that turn to any good account?

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count? Yes: for *Dagon* falls down before the Ark: the *Philistines* own hands brought it home again; and they give glory to God. So that it turned to a good account.

But especially that instance of *David*. There was a Pestilence, and many thousands died: and did it come by sin? Yes; *David* numbers the people. 1. but did it turn to any good account? Yes: for then the Lord told *David* where his Temple should be built, 2 *Chron.* 3. 1. *David* had a great desire to know where Gods house should be built; but never was it told till now. So that thus this suffering turned to a good account; although it came by sin. Possibly a suffering may come by sin, and yet (through grace) it may turn to a good account.

But then the great Question of all this, I suppose thus: Suppose there be such a great reward laid out for those that suffer for the Name of Christ: suppose there is a great deal of suffering will turn to a little account: suppose there is a little suffering will turn to a great account: How shall I so order and manage my sufferings, as that my sufferings may turn to a good account? Indeed this is a great Question, and worthy of all our consideration.

For answer unto this:

First, if you would order and manage all your sufferings so as they may turn to a good account, be sure of this, That all your sufferings be underlain with Godliness; *Personal Godliness*, and *Equal Godliness*.

With *personal godliness*: for if your person be not accepted, your suffering will not: if you be not in Christ, your suffering will come to little.

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As the tree is, so is the fruit that grows upon the tree : if the tree be a Crab, all the fruit is but Crabs. And if you be a Crab, and not implanted into Jesus Christ, your suffering will not be accepted.

And not onely personal godliness, but actual godliness; so as not to lie in any sin, either of omission or commission. For any sin is a hole in the bag of our sufferings : if there be a hole in the bag, all your money will run out. Surely if a man lies in any sin, that sin is a hole in the bottom of the bag, and all the profits of his sufferings will run out, though he suffers never so much for Christ, and for Religion. Therefore that's the first thing; be sure that all your sufferings be underlaid with godliness, personal and actual godliness.

Secondly, if you would so order and manage your sufferings, as that they may turn to a good account; then labour to get your understanding clear, and your will free, in the matter and business of sufferings. For though the thing that you suffer for be never so right, yet if you have not a clear understanding in what you suffer, your suffering will turn to little. And though you have never so clear an understanding, yet if your will be not free, it will turn to little. You know how it was with Moses; it's said, *He refused to be call'd the son of Pharaohs daughter, and chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God.* Why when was this? when he came of years. Why when he came of years? Because then he had discretion and understanding; and the Holy-ghost would shew, that he did what he did understandingly in the point of his suffering: and he did it freely in the point of his will; for he chose rather: choosing

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is an act of the will. So that if you would have your sufferings turn to a good account, labour to get a clear understanding in the matter of your sufferings, and be very free in your will.

You will say to me, How can I be freely willing to part with my house, or land, or liberty?

Yes, you may be very free, and freely willing to part with all in reference to the will of God your Father. Christ himself said, *Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.* He was unwilling, in regard of the thing it self he suffer'd: but he was very willing, in regard of the Fathers will; and therefore he saith, *Not my will, but thy will be done.* This is the second thing: let your understanding be clear, and your will be free in the matter of your sufferings.

Thirdly, take heed you run not into any suffering without a Call, nor rush out of that suffering without the same Call from God. Noah was in the Ark; and when the waters were abated from off the earth, Noah would not stir out of the Ark. Why would not Noah go out when the waters were abated? Why as Noah had a Call to go in, so he would have the same Call to go out. A man must not run into a suffering without a Call, and he must not rush out of it without a Call. And therefore you shall finde Christ and the Apostles, and all the Martyrs, that thus they acted: they would hide, and go aside, and avoid their sufferings: but when they were in hold, they would not go out, though the doors were open. So that that's the third thing; be sure of this, that you do not run into sufferings without a Call, nor rush out of sufferings without the same Call from God.

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Fourthly, if you would order and manage all your sufferings so as they may turn to a good account, then set all your losses upon Christs head, and upon Christs score: which you may do, if you do suffer for Christs cause; which you may do, if you do suffer according to Christs example; which you may do, if you suffer with the same spirit and disposition that Christ did, & suffer in the strength of Christ; set all upon the head & score of Christ.

Fifthly, if you would so order and manage all your sufferings as that they may turn to a good account, then take heed that there be no contradiction found in the way of your suffering. A man may be very stiff, and stand out here, and yet he may yeeld there. Saith the Apostle, *If I build again what I have destroyed, I make my self a transgressor.* And, *Blessed is the man that condemns not himself in the thing that he allows.* 'Tis possible I may build that with one hand, that I may pull down with another. Possibly a man may be very stiff, and stand out at such a thing, and yet he may yeeld there. There may be contradictions found in the way of our suffering. And let me tell you this, if it be thus, your sufferings will come to little. Take heed that there be not contradictions therefore found in the way of your sufferings.

Sixthly, if you would manage your sufferings so as they may turn to a good account, then let your eye be more upon the Publike good, then upon your own private loss; more upon Gods designe, then your own detriment; more upon Gods dishonour, then your own grievance, or your own pressure. 'Tis good for a man to be spiritual and savoury in his suffering; our Saviour saith, *Such worshippers the Father seeks, &c.* and truly I say, Such

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Such sufferers doth the Father seek, that suffer in spirit and truth, whose spirits are savoury in their sufferings. And when is that? when that your eye is more upon the publick good; then your own private loss; more upon Gods designe, then your own detriment; more upon Gods dishonour, then your own grievance, and your own pressure.

Seventhly, if you would so order and manage all your sufferings, as that they may turn to a good account, then let your eye be upon that, and observe what that is that you have most delighted in, and that your heart is most upon in this world; and give that up to God the first thing you do: for truly nothing is done till that be done. 'Tis said of *Abraham*, that God tempted *Abraham*. Divines observe, that *Abraham* met with ten temptations; but it's never said before, that God tempted him, till he spake to him to offer up his son *Isaac*. Why there was his heart, and his love, and his delight. And where doth a mans temptation grow, but where his *Isaac* is? he shall be sure to be tried there. Here was *Abrahams* heart, here lay his temptation. And so, it may be, my heart is upon my house, or upon my land, or upon my trade; and I cannot part with this: I can part with any thing else, but when it comes to this, I am ready to say, The good Lord pardon me in this. Many say, I will not adventure to suffer any further for the Name of Christ; then I can secure my trade, or my land, or relations: but when it comes to this, I cannot part with these; I must have my trade, &c. Here's a *but* comes in. *Ananias* and *Sapphira* they parted with a great deal, but it came to little, because they had a reserve. And so if we have our reserves with the Lord,

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our sufferings will come to little. So that observe, that you give that up first to God that your hearts are most upon: for nothing is done in suffering till that be done.

Eighthly, if you would so order and manage your sufferings, as they may turn to a good account, then let the load, and let the weight and the burden of all your sufferings be drawn upon the wheels of *faith* and *love*: those two wheels of *faith* towards God, and *love* towards man. Saith the Apostle, By *faith* Moses chose rather to suffer afflictions with the people of God. How so? why by *faith* he saw him that is invisible; and so trampled upon visible things. And by *faith* he had an eye to the recompence of reward; and so overlooked these things. And by *faith* he saw greater wealth in the reproach of Christ, then in all the treasures of Egypt. And so the three children, they suffered by *faith*, and it turned to a good account.

And as for *love*, you know what the Apostle saith, If I give my body to be burnt, and want love, it profiteth me nothing. So then, as ever you desire your sufferings may turn to a good account, let your *faith* towards God, and your *love* towards man be exercised. And let these be the two great wheels that all your sufferings shall be drawn upon.

Ninthly, if you would order your sufferings so as they may turn to a good account, then labour to be serviceable in and by your sufferings. If ever God call you to a prison, labour to be as serviceable in and by your suffering, as ever you can. Peter was in prison; what came on't? was there any converted? No. Why so? Peter slept. I but Paul and Silas they sang in the stocks, and they preach in the prison, and there's the *Jaylor* converted.

verted. They were serviceable in and by their sufferings, and it turned to a good account. And therefore if you would desire that your sufferings may turn to a good account, labour to be serviceable in & by your sufferings as God calls you into.

Tenthly, when you have done all, and suffered all, then say, and think in truth, that you are unprofitable servants; and let your eye be wholly to the sufferings of Christ: offer your own sufferings upon the sufferings of Christ, in reference to your acceptance. For though you may have an eye to the recompence of reward, to encourage you to suffer; yet you are wholly to look to the sufferings of Christ in reference to your acceptance. And therefore when you have done all, think and say, you are unprofitable. *Two men went up to pray, and the one he was a Pharisee, and the other a Publican.* The Pharisee he comes and praises God he was not as the Publican: *I thank God I am not as this Publican. I fast, and pray, and I am not as this Publican.* Well, there comes the Publican, and he smites himself upon the brest, and says, I am a poor sinner: Oh! *the Lord be merciful unto me a poor sinner.* So say I, Two men go up to suffer, and there's one stands and vaunts, and saith, I thank the Lord I am not so cowardly and dastardly as these poor-spirited men that dare do nothing; my flesh shall fry in the fire. But the other stands at a distance, and saith, Oh, I am a poor creature, I am afraid to suffer, and I am afraid I shall betray the Cause of Christ. Now I tell you, this poor trembling soul that is last, shall be first, and he goes away rather justified.

Eleventhly, and lastly, if you would so order and manage your sufferings, as they may turn to
a good

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a good account, praise God over your suffering, and pray to God under your suffering. I put these two together, *praise* and *pray*. This is a certain thing; those sufferings shall turn to a good account, that Christ blesses. How shall I know whether Christ will bless my sufferings? Why if I can bless God over my sufferings, God will bless my sufferings to me. And then, are you call'd at any time to suffer? go away rejoicing that you are counted worthy to suffer for the Name of Christ.

Yet notwithstanding, not onely bless and praise God over your sufferings, but pray unto God under your sufferings. And what should you pray for? Pray unto the Lord, that he would turn your sufferings unto a good account. There is an old promise wrapt up in the Apostles prayer, *1 Pet. 5. 10. The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.* So then, have you suffered a while? you may go then to God, as to the God of all grace, and say, Lord, through thy providence I have now suffered a while: thou art the God of all grace; make me perfect, confirm me, stablish, strengthen, and comfort me; and let all these sufferings turn to a good account. Thus praise God under your sufferings, and pray over your sufferings, and so shall you manage and order all your sufferings, as that they shall turn to a good account.



The way to obtain a sure and great Reward.

SERM. III.

Matth. 19. 28.

And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my Name sake, shall receive an hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

IN this Scripture we have our Saviours answer unto Peters question propounded at ver. 27. *Behold Lord (saith Peter) we have forsaken all, and followed thee: what shall we have therefore?* Our Saviour answers in the following verses; and his answer is partly Comfortable, and partly Cautious. The Cautious part I have spoken to among

mong some of you, from vers. 30. But many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first. The Comfortable part I spake unto the last Lords day in another Meeting. And being now desired to speak the same things unto you, considering that they are of present and universal concernment, I shall do it as briefly and plainly as I can.

The Comfortable part of Christs answer you have in v. 28, 29. wherein our Saviour Christ doth shew what great reward those shall have that do suffer, or leave any worldly interest for him, and for his Name-sake. Which reward doth either relate unto the Apostles, or unto others.

It relateth unto the Apostles, in vers. 28. *Verify I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the regeneration, that is, in the preaching of the Gospel. Preaching of the Gospel is a regenerating work. The preaching of the Law is convincing work; the preaching of the Gospel is regenerating work. Ye which have followed me in the regeneration, in the great work of preaching the Gospel; when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. That's their reward, peculiar and proper unto them.*

The reward which is more large, extending unto all, v. 29. And every one: not one of you shall be rewarded that are mine Apostles; but **EVERY ONE** that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or land, for my Name-sake, shall receive an hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life. From whence then I took up this Observation; and you may observe from the whole thus much:

The Comfortable part I have spoken. That

That whosoever shall leave any worldly interest for Christ, and for his Name-sake, shall be sure to be well rewarded.

He shall be well rewarded: for he shall have an hundred-fold in this life, and everlasting life in the world to come. And he shall be sure to be well rewarded; for he hath put a verily upon it: *Verily I say unto you, and every one that hath forsaken houses, &c.* So then, the Doctrine is clear, *That whosoever shall leave or forsake any worldly interest for Christ, and for his Name-sake, shall be sure to be well rewarded.*

For the clearing of this, first, we must enquire what it is to leave any worldly interest for Christ, and for his Name-sake.

Secondly, what the reward is that such shall have that do so, and wherein it consists. And

Thirdly, what assurance we may have of such a reward.

And first of all, if you do enquire what it is to leave any thing for Christ, forsake any worldly interest for Christ:

I answer, that a man may leave and forsake a worldly interest for Christ two ways:

Either by his own will; or the wills of others.

We do leave and forsake a worldly interest by our own wills, when we do voluntarily and freely deprive our selves of our commodity or satisfaction for Christ; as the Apostles left their ships and nets to follow Christ.

We (secondly) do leave or forsake a worldly interest by the wills of others, when through their oppression or persecution, we are deprived of our own commodity and satisfaction for Christ; and that is called suffering.

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The Comfortable part I have spoken to you.

Sure and great Reward. 61

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Our Saviour Christ here, hath respect to both : and in both these respects it's true, *That whosoever doth leave any worldly interest for Christ, and his Name-sake, shall be sure to be well rewarded.*

But then still to clear it :

Quest. What is it to leave any worldly interest for the Name of Christ?

Ans. The Name of Christ is that whereby Christ is made known unto us ; as the name of a man, is that whereby a man is made known unto us. A man is made known unto us by his name ; so Christ is made known unto us by his Name. That whereby Christ is made known unto us, that's his Name.

Now Christ is made known unto us by his Spirit, and by the Gospel.

By his Spirit he is made known unto us ; for as God the Father is made known unto us by Christ his Son : so Christ is made known unto us by the Spirit. *He shall take of mine, and shew it unto you.* Rich Christ. And upon this account therefore, when a man doth suffer any thing for the Spirit, or for any working of the Holy ghost upon his heart or soul, then he is said to suffer for the Name of Christ. And upon this score it was that John the Baptist was accounted a Martyr of Christ, and enroll'd among the Martyrs of Christ : John the Baptist, if you look into the story, did not suffer for any Gospel-truth : John the Baptist suffered for this, that he reprehended Herods adulterous courtesies ; but the Spirit of Christ put him upon it, and therefore being stirred up thereunto by the Spirit of Christ, he is said to suffer upon the account of Christ. So that, I say, the Spirit of Christ is that whereby Christ is made known unto

us; and when a man doth therefore suffer for any work of the Spirit of Christ, then he is said to suffer for the Name of Christ.

But secondly, Christ also is made known unto us by the Gospel, as by an outward means. The Gospel is the Name of Christ, whereby Christ is made known unto us. Every truth is not a Gospel-truth: 'tis possible that a man may suffer for a truth, and yet not suffer for a Gospel-truth. But look when a man doth suffer for a truth, which is properly the truth of the Gospel, then he is said indeed to suffer for the Name of Christ, whereby Christ is made known. Would you therefore know when a man may be said so suffer for the Name of Christ? Take all together, thus: When a man doth suffer for that whereby Christ is made known unto us, then he suffers for the Name of Christ. Christ is made known unto us by the Spirit; he is made known unto us by the Gospel. Look therefore, when a man doth suffer for the work of the Spirit, which is properly the work of the Spirit; or suffer for the Truth, which is properly the Truth of the Gospel: then plainly he is said to suffer for the Name of Christ: and whosoever doth so, shall be well rewarded. And that's the first thing.

Quest. 2. And then secondly, What is this reward that those shall have, that do leave any worldly interest for Christ, or for the Name of Christ, and wherein doth that consist?

Ans. The reward is great, and it will appear to be very great, if you look into and consider this text and Scripture well. For this reward, it doth relate unto the Apostles, or it relates unto us; to all others that do leave any worldly interest upon the account of Christ.

Now as for the Apostles, their reward is here set down, *That they shall sit with Christ on his throne.* When Christ sits on his throne, the Apostles shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. For the clearing of this, onely these two things.

- 1. What it is for the Apostles to sit on twelve thrones with Christ, judging the twelve tribes.

And 2. Whether are there any degrees of glory, seeing that the Apostles here seem to have a degree of glory given them above other men.

And as for the first, briefly thus.

When Christ shall sit upon the throne, they are said to sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes; to note their communion and fellowship with Christ in his Judicial kingdom.

But whereas the Saints shall judge the world; 'tis true, the Saints shall judge the world, and shall have communion and fellowship with Christ in that great work of judging the world. The Apostles they shall sit as assessors on that day: at the great Assizes, the Apostles shall sit on the bench as assessors, or as Justices of the Peace, by the Judge; and so shall have communion with him. 'Tis true, that all the Saints shall judge the world by their lives, and by their conversations: but the twelve Apostles shall judge the world by their Doctrine: not onely by consenting to the judgment of Christ, as all the Saints shall do; but in Rom. 2. 16. 'tis said, *In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my Gospel.* So that this is all that is here meant, That in the grand and great Assize, that kingdom and glory of Christ, the twelve Apostles they shall have a special fellowship and communion with him above others.

Quest.

Sure and great Reward.

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Quest. But then, are there any degrees of glory? for it would seem here, that the Apostles have some degree of glory above other men. Are there any degrees of glory?

Ans. Yes surely, there are degrees of glory. For as one star differeth from another star in glory, so shall the resurrection be, saith the Apostle.

But though there be degrees of glory, all that glory that the Saints shall have in heaven, shall be of one piece; for there's no envie there. *Envie!* there is none in heaven. And whence comes *Envie*? We may see that among our children, or among men. If you have four or five children, and make them cloaths, if they be cloaths made all of a piece, they do not envie though ones cloaths be bigger then anothers. But if they be not made all of a piece, or my Brothers cloaths are better then mine, or my Sisters cloaths are better then mine; but when they are all of a piece, they do not envie. So if you invite twenty men to dinner, and they all eat of the same dish, there's no envie: but if you have a meaner dish for those that sit at the lower end of the Table, say they, Indeed we sat at such a Table but we had a meaner dish: and so they envie. But if one man eat more then another, yet if they eat of the same dish, there is no envie. Now in heaven there is no *Envie*: for though there be degrees of glory, yet it shall be all of a piece, and all of a dish. But now though this glory in heaven shall be all of a piece, and though there be degrees of glory in heaven, yet I don't think this Scripture to be understood of the degrees of glory in heaven; for there's no judging of the twelve tribes in heaven: *Christ shall then at last give up his kingdom unto the Father.* This is spoken therefore of a glorious Judgement on this side heaven; and it

is here promised unto the Apostles above all others, as a reward suitable to them: for they were twelve, preached to the twelve tribes; some received the Gospel, some did not: and therefore here is a reward propounded suitable unto them. But thus much for the reward that concerns the Apostles, (by the way).

But then it will be said, What is the reward that doth concern all those that leave any worldly interest for Christ, or suffer for the Name of Christ?

Why that doth either relate unto this life, or unto the life that is to come.

It relates unto this life; and then saith our Saviour, *There is an hundred-fold*. Look whatsoever that is that you do lay out for Christ here in this life, you shall receive an hundred-fold for it, even in this life. Here's a great matter, and it is well worth our considering. Look whatsoever you do lay out for Christ, whatsoever worldly interest you do part withal for Christ, or lay out for Christ, that you shall receive in an hundred-fold, even in this life.

And to make this out unto you: I confess it is a great matter.

But first of all, (to clear it) is it not a great matter for us to be enriched with divine promises? one promise is worth a world: he is rich indeed, that is rich in promises. We say a man may be a rich man, though he have never a penny of money in his purse: he may have a great many Bonds, and we say he is a rich man. I am sure that Christian is rich indeed, that's rich in promises. Well, when comes the promise? Look when a man doth forsake any worldly interest for

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the Lord, then comes the promise. For that, look into Gen. 12. and you shall see what a great promise God makes to Abraham, ver. 2. I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be blessed. Well, but when comes this promise? The first verse tells you: Now the Lord said unto Abraham, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy fathers house, unto the land that I will shew thee.

Quest. I but suppose that Abraham do so, what will the Lord then bestow upon Abraham?

Ans. Why I will make of thee a great nation.

Object. But if I go out of my country, (Abraham might say) I shall be scattered, and come to nothing, I and my posterity.

Ans. Nay, but I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee.

Object. I, but every body will say, I am a fool to leave my country, and go I know not whither.

Ans. Nay, but I will make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing.

Object. I but I shall meet with divers enemies abroad, and they will fall upon me, and ruine me.

Ans. Nay, (saith the Lord) And I will bless them that bless thee, and I will curse him that curseth thee. See what a great promise here is made: When did this promise come? So Abraham departed, as the Lord had spoken to him, Look when we do forsake any worldly interest for the Lord, then comes the promise. Now is not one promise better then any worldly interest, an hundred times better?

But secondly, is it not a great matter to have the favour of God the Father, the heart of God

drawn out unto us, to be amiable and beautiful in the eyes of God the Father? Now look when a man doth forsake any worldly interest for God, then he is beautiful in the eyes of God; never so amiable or beautiful in the eyes of God, as then. Take it thus:

Beauty raises Persecution, and Persecution raises Beauty: they are mutual causes.

First, I say, Beauty raises Persecution. Persecution you shall find doth always fall upon the beautiful piece of Religion, upon those that are the most beautiful pieces of Religion. So long as Christ our Saviour liv'd, persecution lay upon him, and not upon the Apostles: when Christ was dead, then the Apostles were the most beautiful piece, and then the persecution lay upon them especially. When the Apostles were gone off the stage, in the Primitive times, the Persecution always fell upon the most eminent Saints. Persecution always falls upon the beauty of Religion. In *Matth. 13* we finde that persecution is compared to the scorching of the Sun: *And when the sun was up, they were scorched*; speaking of the stony ground: which is expounded in *vers. 21.* by persecution: *For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word.* The scorching sun here, is interpreted to be persecution. And you shall finde that the scorching Sun falls with most prejudice upon the greatest beauty: the greatest beauty suffers most by the scorching sun. Truly so persecutoin falls upon the beauty of Religion: you may see it in *Contr. 1* where the Spouse is described in her beauty: *If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, &c. I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaohs* *char-*

chariots. *Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels, thy neck with chains of gold.* But saith the, at vers. 5. *I am black but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.* Here's her beauty: what then? Look not upon me because I am black, because the sun hath look'd upon me. *The sun hath look'd upon me: what's that? Persecution: My mothers children were angry with me. The scorching sun of Persecution hath fallen upon my beauty.* That's the thing I speak of, namely, that Persecution always falls upon the beautiful piece of Religion.

And so on the other side, as Beauty raises Persecution, so Persecution raises Beauty. A man's never more beautiful in the eyes of God, then when he is persecuted for the Name of Christ, and when he doth leave and forsake a worldly interest upon the account of Christ. You may see it in *Psal. 45. vers. 10. Hearken O daughter, consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy fathers house: so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty.* See where the beauty lies, in forgetting of the fathers house: in leaving and forsaking a worldly interest upon the account of Christ, here's beauty. Now is it not an hundred times better to be beautiful in the eyes of God the Father, and of Christ, then to have a worldly interest? Certainly it is.

But then thirdly, Is it not a great matter for a man to have communion and fellowship with Jesus Christ in his sufferings? *If ye suffer with him, ye shall reign with him, saith the Apostle.* Now we have communion and fellowship with Christ in his sufferings, either at the Lords Supper,

per, or in our sufferings for Christ : but with this difference : we have communion and fellowship with Christ in our sufferings for Christ, by *filling up the sufferings of Christ* : we have communion and fellowship with Christ in the Lords Supper ; but then we don't fill up the sufferings of Christ : but in our sufferings for Christ we have communion and fellowship with Christ, by filling up the sufferings of Christ. So that here's a speciality of communion with Christ, by suffering for the Lord Jesus. Now is it not an hundred times better to have communion and fellowship with Christ in his sufferings, then to have a worldly interest ?

Fourthly, is it not a great matter to have the Spirit of God and of glory rest upon us ? You know what the Apostle Peter saith concerning those that suffer for the Name of Christ, *The Spirit of God and of glory shall rest upon you*, as the dove rested upon the Ark ; it *bevered* upon the waters, but at last she *rested* upon the Ark : so the Spirit of the Lord *bevers* over men, but it *rests* upon the *Suffering Saints*. Now is it not an hundred times better to have the Spirit of God and of glory resting upon us, then to have any worldly interest ? Certainly it is.

Fifthly, is it not a great deal better to be filled and abound with divine and spiritual consolations ? Look when a man doth leave any worldly interest for Christ, or doth suffer for the Name of Jesus Christ, then shall his heart be filled with consolations. You see what is said for that, in *2 Cor. 1.* saith the Apostle, *vers. 5.* *For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.* Why now is it not an hundred times better to be filled with inward consolations,

solations, then to have a worldly interest by one? certainly it is.

Sixthly, is it not a great matter for us to have an assurance of our salvation, and of our election, to be sealed to us? Surely 'tis a great matter. Now look when a man doth suffer for the Name of Jesus Christ, then comes the assurance, then is the sealing time. When we do bear our testimony unto Christ, then Christ bears his testimony unto us, that we are his children: when we bear testimony to the truth of Christ, Christ bears testimony to the truth of grace in us. See what is said, Phil. i. 28. *And in nothing terrified by your adversaries, which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.* A token, and of God; it is Gods token. But look into Acts 9. and you shall see what the Lord saith unto *Ananias* concerning *Paul*. The Lord saith unto him, *Go thy way Ananias; for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to carry my Name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. Why? For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my Name sake.* So that suffering for the Name of Christ, seals up our assurance, the assurance of our salvation, the assurance of our election. Now is it not an hundred times better to have the assurance of our election, and of our salvation sealed, then to have some particular worldly interest lying by us? certainly it is.

But seventhly, is it not a great matter for us to reign with Christ a thousand years? Such a thing there is promised in Revel. 20. I will not now debate how and in what manner it shall be made good: but this is certain, there is such a thing promised, as reigning with Christ a thou-

sand years. Who is that promised to? vers. 4. such as those that suffer for the Name of Christ: *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them. And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their bands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.* Now is it not an hundred times better to live and reign with Christ a thousand years in the day of glory, then to have some particular worldly interest together for the present? Sure it is.

Now put all these seven things together: why every one of them is a great matter, but put them all together, and you cannot but say we shall have a thousand-fold in this life.

But mark, the Apostle tells us we shall have an hundred-fold in the same kinde, in this life: how can that be?

Why if you look into Mark 10. you shall finde that Mark doth not say in so many words, that we shall have an hundred-fold in this life, in the same kinde; but saith thus: *Jesús answered and said, Verily I say unto you, that there is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the Gospels, but he shall receive an hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with PERSECUTIONS.* But he do not say he shall have it in the same kinde, An hundred-fold in this life, and an hundred-fold in the same kinde. When Peter left his nets and his fishing for Christ, Christ made him a fisher of men: now that was an hundred-fold.

fold in this life, but not in the same kinde. But to clear up this, take these four or five considerations.

First, consider this: whatsoever God doth for us immediately, that is an hundred times better, then what he doth for us by means. Now look when a man doth forsake a worldly interest for Christ, and puts himself upon Christ, Christ will provide immediately for him. You may see it in *Matth. 15.* there were a company that had followed Christ, and had followed him so long, that they were faint: Christ would not send them away fainting, *vers. 32.* *Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they have continued with me now three days, and have nothing to eat. They have nothing to eat: they had left their houses, they had left their own victuals, and their own provisions, and they had nothing to eat; and (saith he) I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.* Well, what shall be done? here Christ works a miracle; *And they took up of the broken meat that was left seven baskets full.* Do you think now that ever these men made a better meal in all their lives? I am perswaded it was an hundred-fold better to them, then the best meal they had in all their lives. And so shew that Christ will rather work a miracle, then that those shall want which leave ought for him. What Christ doth for us immediately, that he doth fully, and sweetly; and is an hundred times better then that he doth by means.

Secondly, look what the Lord doth for our children, and our posterity, that the Lord doth for us, in Scripture-language. In experience,

what God doth do for our children, and for our posterity, that God doth for us. Now look whatsoever that is that you that are Parents shall leave for the Name of Jesus Christ, Christ will give it in an hundred-fold; it may be to your posterity. What shall we say to the second Commandment? The second Commandment you know is this: *Thou shalt not make to thy self any graven image; that is, thou shalt not worship God by any means but that which God himself hath appointed.* Here all the inventions of men are forbidden; here all the institutions of God are commanded. Well, what doth God promise upon the keeping of this? *I will shew mercy to a thousand generations.* Stay a little; before, he saith he will punish them that break this Commandment, to the third and fourth generation; *I will punish them that hate me, to the third and fourth generation.* Them that hate me; pray why, why are those that break the second Commandment said to hate God? it is not said upon the breaking of any other Commandment, that it is a hating of God, but upon the breach of the second Commandment.

I conceive the reason essentially is this, because Persecution grows upon the second Commandment. Those that hate the people of God, hate God. Now where doth the hatred and persecution grow? Upon the keeping the second Commandment; not conforming to well inventions, keeping close to the institutions of God; here's Persecution grows upon this Commandment; well, saith God, *I will visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.* But

as for those that keep this Commandment : *And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my Commandments.* Why doth he say Commandments, and not, *this Commandment* ?

The reason is this, because in the second Commandment all institutions are commanded ; all the inventions of men are forbidden. All the institutions of Christ come within the second Commandment ; and therefore, saith he, *I will shew mercy to a thousand generations of those that love me, and keep my commandments.* Now here's an hundred-fold ; in that mercy is shewn to a thousand generations. Well, what God gives to our children, and to our posterity, that he gives unto us.

A third consideration is this. Look what that is which we have in effect, that we have in truth, though we have it not in the formality. Now look whatsoever you do lay out for Christ, whatsoever worldly interest you do part withal, and forsake for Christ, that you shall have in effect. Why ? because the same affection doth still remain. I will express it thus : Suppose you have a Crab-stock, and there you plant a Harvie, or a Pearmain, or a Pippin ; why the Pippin is an hundred times better then the Crab would have been. Why 'tis the same stock still, under the Harvie, or Pippin, or Pearmain ; onely there's an Apple planted that's an hundred times better then the Crab was. So now, you have a delight in the things of the world ; well, you leave this delight for Christ ; you leave not the affection, but there's a better object planted upon the affection ; and there being a better object planted upon the same delight, thus you have
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the same thing you part withal for the Name of Christ in an hundred-fold.

Fourthly, look what that is that we have in a way of substitution, that we have in truth, and in effect, though we have it not in formality. Now look what that is that you do leave for the Name of Christ, that you shall have an hundred-fold in a way of substitution. The Apostles they left their houses; Peter left a house, it may be, or a fisher-boat, for Christ: why he had an hundred houses in a way of substitution, he had an hundred mens houses open to receive him; and happy was that *Lydia* that could receive the Apostle. And this is that which you have *Psal. 45. vers. 10. Hearken, O daughter, and consider; incline thine ear: forget also thine own people, and thy fathers house. What then? Why then at vers. 16. In stead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayst make Princes in all the earth.* Here now is the same, in a way of substitution. 'Tis true, 'tis not the same in formality, but in a way of substitution; here's that which is an hundred-fold.

Fifthly, look what that is which we have in a way of satisfaction, that we have in truth and in effect, though not in formality. Look what that is that you do leave or forsake for Christ, that you shall have in satisfaction an hundred-fold more then you had before. If you leave any thing for Christ, you shall have an hundred-fold more satisfaction in what you have given for Christ, then what you keep for your selves. So that an hundred-fold in a way of substitution, and an hundred-fold in a way of satisfaction. And thus you see how we receive an hundred-fold

fold in this life : That whatsoever you do lay out for Christ here, you shall be paid an hundred-fold ; and how, and in what manner.

But then secondly, what is that reward that we shall have in the life to come ? Suppose a man do leave a worldly interest for the Name of Christ, or that he do suffer for the Name of Christ ; what is that reward that he shall have in the world to come ?

Truly that reward is great, and I am not able to speak it ; it requires the unwearied hand and arm of Eternity, to tell over all the wealth of glory that the suffering people of God shall have in the world to come. Onely thus much I'll say, and briefly.

First of all, That reward that you that are suffering Saints shall have in the world to come, it shall be an open reward : for, saith Christ, *he that confesseth me before men, him will I confess also before my Father, &c.*

Secondly, it shall be a comfortable reward : for, saith the book of the Revelations, *Then all tears shall be wiped out of your eyes.* He doth not say, *From your eyes, or from your cheeks ; no, but they shall be wiped out of your eyes.* So that the eyes shall be then such a womb as shall never breed a tear again. All tears shall be wiped not from your eyes, but out of your eyes. So in Rev. 7.

Thirdly, as it shall be a comfortable reward, so an honourable reward : for, saith our Saviour Christ, *Be faithful unto the death, and I will give thee the crown of life.* And

Fourthly, as it shall be an honourable reward, so a proportionable reward, a reward proportionable to all your sufferings. You know what the

Apostle

Apostle saith, *These light afflictions which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.*

Will you say, I but our afflictions are exceeding heavie. Nay, saith the Apostle, *they are light.*

But grant they be; to balance the account, you shall have *a weight of glory.*

Will you say, They are long and tedious.

Nay, saith the Apostle, they are but *light.*

But grant they be long and tedious.

To balance the account, you shall have *an exceeding and an eternal weight of glory.*

And then fifthly, as it shall be a reward proportionable, so it shall be a reward transcending; over and beyond proportion, over and beyond all expression, beyond all our apprehensions or thoughts. Who is able to think or apprehend what *the inheritance of the Saints in light* is; that inheritance that is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away? Look into Rom. 8. *If ye be children, then are ye heirs, heirs of God, and joynt-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him. See, it hangs upon suffering; If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. Now, if children, then heirs. All our children are not heirs: well, but all the children of God shall be heirs, heirs of God. What's that? Some think that's to be understood objectively, that they shall inherit God: and indeed, they have all things, that have him that hath all things. Heirs of God. But take it efficiently, shall be Gods heirs, and joynt-heirs with Christ. He doth not say, Joynt-purchasers with Christ, but joynt-heirs, joynt-heirs*

beirs with Christ. What shall Christ inherit ? Why Christ is God the Fathers heir ; and be never displeased his Father ; he will not disinherit him therefore. Look what God the Father is worth , that Christ shall be worth : and look what Christ is worth , that the suffering Saints shall be worth : for they be joynt-beirs with Christ.

Lo here, here's an inheritance now, and here's the reward that the suffering Saints shall have. What a large inheritance is here ! This is that they shall have in the life to come. And so you see what their reward is that lose or forsake any thing upon the account of Christ , or suffer for the Name of Christ.

But then thirdly , what assurance is there of this reward ?

I'll go no further then the text : our Saviour Christ here puts a *Verily* upon it : *Verily* : you have the word of Christ for this reward. If an honest man make you a promise , you will believe him , especially if he saith , I protest unto you. Why Jesus Christ hath protested this promise : *Verily*, saith he, *you shall have an hundred-fold in this life , and in the world to come, life everlasting.*

Well then, the question is , Why should those that suffer for the Name of Christ have such a great reward as this ? Why should those that leave or forsake any worldly interest upon the account of Christ, why should those above all other people be so well rewarded ?

I answer : These above all other people, that suffer for the Name of Christ , these are those that do honour Jesus Christ. What is honour ?

Ho-

Honour, it is the testimony of anothers excellencie. When I testifie of another mans excellencie, then I honour him. Now look when a man doth forsake a worldly interest for the truth of Christ, then he testifie there's an excellencie in Christ: and the greater the worldly interest is I do forsake, and the less the truth is I forsake it for; the more do I testifie an excellencie in Christ: Christ therefore will be sure to honour them, they shall be well rewarded.

Secondly, these people of all other people, are the people that do trust in the Lord before the sons of men: *O how great is thy loving kindness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee, before the sons of men?* Some trust in God, and believe in the heart (as they say): But they do not trust in God before the Sons of men. But now, when a man forsakes a worldly interest, and doth suffer for the Name of Christ, then he trusts in the Lord before the sons of men: And therefore, *O how great is the loving kindness of God that is laid up for them!*

But then thirdly, these above all other people that suffer for the Name of Christ: these are those people that are firm and fast unto God. God loves a fixed Spirit. God doth not love to see a man unsetled in points of Religion. Now when a man will leave a worldly interest for the Cause of Christ, and the Name of Christ, there's a fixation in such a man. And therefore he of all other people shall be well rewarded.

Fourthly, these people of all other people, are the most opposed by the Grand Enemy of Christ: Well, who is the Grand Enemy of Christ

in these days? Antichrist: Antichrist is the Grand Enemy of Jesus Christ. Now these that suffer for the Name of Christ, are most opposed by the Grand Enemy of Christ: And Christ will be sure to love them that are most opposed by his Grand Enemy.

Fifthly and lastly, these of all other people, they are the people that are overcomers: How many promises are made to those that overcome, in the second and third of the Revelation. To him that overcometh, to him that overcometh, a promise still is made to him that overcometh.

But how do we overcome?

In the 12 of the Revelation. And they overcame him, that is, the Devil, by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death. These of all other people, are the overcoming people. As Christ overcame the Devil, by being overcome, so men overcome, by being overcome. Those that suffer upon the account of Jesus Christ, when they are overcome by the world, in the view of the world, then they overcome. Now Christ will be sure to reward them well that overcome. And thus you see why these of all other people shall be so well rewarded. And thus you have the Doctrine cleared.

Application. Now then by way of Application.

It is to be true, that whosoever doth leave or forsake any worldly interest for Christ, and the Name of Christ, shall be sure to be well rewarded: why should not we be willing to loose and to be lost for Christ?

Good Friends, the time is coming when you may be called to leave your Trades, to leave your Shops, to leave any worldly interest you have for

the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. But is this true, that such shall be well rewarded? Why should we not be willing then to lose and be lost, to suffer for the Name of Christ? Can you have a greater improvement of your Money? A man would think he improves his Money well that hath ten in the hundred, six in the hundred now: But here's an hundred for one; not ten in the hundred, but an hundred for one. If a Merchant ventures to Sea, if he could be sure to gain twelve in the hundred, he would think he came to a good Market. *Why behold here, here's an hundred fold in this life, and all this insured by Christ; Verily, verily I say unto you. 'Tis insured by the word of Jesus Christ; not ten, but an hundred; not twelve in the hundred, but an hundred for one, even in this life.* Who would not be willing to suffer for the Name of Christ? 'Tis recorded of Queen Elizabeth, That when she was in the Tower, she lookt out of a Window, and saw a milk-maid go by singing; and seeing her, O, said she, that I were a Milk-maid, then I should go singing! But when she came to the Throne, she reigned forty four years. Now had she known that she should have been delivered from her imprisonment, and brought to the Throne, and there have reigned forty four years; would she have wisht her self a Milk-maid? Beloved, we are assured of a great reward in Heaven, an hundred fold in this life, and a great and glorious reward in the life to come; and therefore when we come to suffer, shall I peevishly say, Would I had been a Milk-maid? would I had been born in a mean condition? O no! how willing should we be to suffer for the Name of Jesus Christ? *But*

But some will say, I am not unwilling to suffer for the Name of Christ, so it be for the Name of Christ, but there are many false glosses put upon our sufferings.

Saith the Adversary, Man, friend, you don't suffer for the Name of Christ, and the truth of Christ; but for Sedition and Rebellion, and because you will not be obedient to Authority; and these and the like glosses are put upon the people of God. And how can I be willing to suffer now?

No Indeed, if these things be true: for the Apostle saith, That we are not to suffer as evil doers.

But I pray tell me, When did any of the people of God suffer for the Cause of God; but there were such glosses as these? Saith *Herod*, *These are a rebellious people, and it is not for the Kings profit to suffer them.* And so when Christ himself suffered, He is not a friend to *Cæsar*, but an enemy. Well, then came the Apostles, and when the Apostles came, what a guise was put upon their sufferings? These are seditious, and is so that turn the world upside-down are come hither. And do not you finde in Scripture and experience, that it is no new thing for men to persecute Religion upon the account of Religion? Saith Christ, For which of my good works go ye about to kill me? No, no, thou art mistaken, we go not about to kill thee for thy good works, but because thou break'st the Sabbath, &c. So that 'tis no new thing to persecute Religion, even upon the account of Religion.

But then you will say, If it be so, how shall I be able to know that I do truly suffer for the

Name of Christ? How shall I be able in the midst of all these *blinds* and *disguises*? How shall I see through them all, that I may be able to say, Nay, but in truth, I do suffer for the Name of Christ.

Why, you have heard it in the general already; only a little more particularly to open

If you do suffer for the Work of the Spirit of God upon your heart, the Work that the Holy Ghost hath wrought upon your heart: If you do suffer for the Truth, which is properly the Truth of the Gospel; whatsoever disguises men put upon your sufferings, plainly you suffer for Name of Jesus Christ.

Again, if you suffer for the Cause of Christ, for the Ways of Christ, for the Ordinances of Christ, for the Children of Christ, for the Liberty which Christ hath purchased for you; then you do suffer for the Name of Jesus Christ.

But thirdly, if you do suffer for the worship of Christ, as it is distinguished from *Jewish* worship, from *Antichristian* worship, from *Worldly* worship; then you suffer for the Name of Christ. for the *Worship* of Christ, is the *Name* of Christ: And all Nations go forth in the *Name* of their God. Now if you do suffer for the worship of Christ, as it is distinguished from the *Jewish* worship, from *Antichristian* worship, from *Worldly* worship; then you do plainly suffer for the Name of Christ.

The worship of the *Jews*, and the way of the *Jews* was National; but the worship of Christ and the Gospel is Congregational.

The worship of Christ is distinguished from *Antichristian*

tichristian worship: For that's humane, and by humane inventions; but the worship of Jesus Christ is Divine, and from Heaven.

The worship of Christ is distinguish'd from the worship of the world, for that's Pompous, that's Ceremonious; a carnal worship like unto the world it self; but the worship of Jesus Christ is plain and simple. Such worshippers doth the Father seek, as worship him in spirit and in truth. Now if you do suffer for the worship of Christ, as it is distinguish'd from the worship of the Jews, Antichrist, and of the World; then you do certainly suffer for the Name of Christ.

Fourthly, if you do suffer for the not-doing of that, which Jesus Christ hath justified his own Disciples for the not doing of, then do you suffer for the Gospel, and so for the Name of Jesus Christ. Now look into the 15 of *Matth*, and you shall see what Christ did justify his Disciples in. And the Scribes and the Pharisees came to Christ, and they say unto him, *Why do thy Disciples transgress the tradition of the Elders? What's that? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.* Why that's an indifferent thing; surely the Disciples would not stand off for an indifferent thing. Yes that they did, and Christ justified them in it.

But this was hatch'd with the tradition of the Elders of the Church, and surely they would not stand off now. Yes, that they did, and Christ justifies them in it, for Christ said, *Why do you also transgress the commandments of God for your traditions?* So that if you do suffer for not doing that, which Jesus Christ hath justified his Disciples for

the

the not doing of; then you suffer for the Gospel, and for the Name of Christ.

Fifthly, If two things be laid before you, and there is sin on the one hand, and on the other hand there is suffering for Christ: Sin on the one hand, and suffering on the other: If now you chuse rather to take up the suffering, then to commit the sin; you do plainly suffer for the Name of Jesus Christ. And therefore look whatsoever the reward is, that great reward is which they shall have that suffer for the Name of Christ; all that reward is yours. Be of good comfort, all that reward is yours: O, and if ever you be call'd to suffer for the Name of Christ, go away rejoicing that you are accounted worthy to suffer shame, or any thing for the Name of Jesus Christ. O what great encouragement is here from this great Rewarder! Who would not be willing now to suffer for the Name of Jesus Christ?

But you will say to me, What shall we do that we may be willing to suffer for the Name of Christ? for I confess I am very backward and unwilling to suffer for the Name of Christ.

Do you say so?

But it may be you are not convinced that it is for the Name of Christ.

But are you sensible of your unwillingness? Why, I use to say this, He is not far from a grace that is sensible of a contrary evil: And 'tis a true speech; He is not far from humility that is sensible of pride; he is not far from faith, that is sensible of unbelief. So he is not far from being willing to suffer for the Name of Christ that is sensible of his own unwillingness.

But

But now suppose that for the present you are very unwilling to suffer for the Name of Christ.

You may know this, That willingness to suffer for the Name of Christ, is part of our suffering Grace; and suffering Grace is given upon suffering ground: *Unto you it is given not only to believe, but to suffer.* The opportunity to suffer is the gift of God. The will and heart to suffer is the gift of God. And the strength to suffer is the gift of God. These are three gifts in one gift.

But when is this suffering grace given?

It's given upon suffering ground: In that hour there shall be wisdom given you: well, to be willing to suffer for the Name of Christ, is part of our suffering grace; and therefore when you come upon the suffering ground, then you shall have the suffering grace.

I but you will say, Indeed I find my heart extremely backward to suffer for the Name of Christ. What shall I do, that I may be willing now for the present to suffer for the Cause or the Name of Christ? Here are divers Directions.

Directions to suffer for the Name of Christ.

First, Whensoever you do receive any thing from God, when you do receive it, then ingage your hearts to offer it up unto God, when God calls for it again, to lay it out for God. And if at any time you find your hearts willing, then pray to God, and say, The Lord continue this in the thoughts of my poor heart for ever: whensoever you receive, then ingage, and keep this ingagement fresh upon your hearts.

Secondly, Train up your selves in leaving and forsaking a worldly interest for the Name of Christ; the Gospel calls for this work daily. As you know the Parable: A certain man made a great feast and invited many; and sent his servants at Supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come, for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. One said, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go see it: Another said, I have bought five yoke of Oxen, and I must go prove them: Another said, I have married a wife, and therefore cannot come. All these were excuses. But we should daily be parting with a worldly interest for the Gospel and Name of God. It was a true speech of Mr. Greenham, He will never be able to suffer by a Papist, that cannot suffer from a Protestant. Train up your selves every day; daily you must meet with one Temptation or another, therefore be daily training your selves up in this work of leaving and forsaking your worldly interest for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, Use the World as if you us'd it not, for the fashion of this world passeth away. He that is glewed to the world, will never leave and forsake much of the worldly interest for the name of Jesus Christ: the more a mans heart is glewed to the world and the things thereof, the more unwilling he will be to part with a worldly interest for Jesus Christ. Therefore let him that uses the world, be as if he used it not; he that marries, as if he married not; and they that weep, as if they wept not; and they that rejoyce, as though they rejoyced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it, for the fashion of this

this world passeth away. Witness the Revolutions of these latter times.

Fourthly, Study Christ crucified much: Let me say this to you, and to my self (and I pray consider of it) the more frequently and seriously we do think on Christ crucified, and what Christ did leave and forsake for us, the more willing shall we be to leave and forsake any worldly interest for Jesus Christ. I should think thus: What, shall Christ leave his *Heaven* for me, and shall not I leave my *Earth* for him? What, shall Jesus Christ leave the bosome of his Father, and that sweet Relation for me, and shall not I leave the bosome of my Relation for him! What, shall Jesus Christ suffer for me a *curst death*, and shall not I be willing to suffer a *blessed death* for him? The Death of Christ hath blessed our death; Christ hath suffered a *curst death* for us, and our death is made blessed by the death of Christ. And shall Christ suffer a *curst death* for me, and shall not I be willing to suffer a *blessed death* for him? Think much of what Christ left for you, and then you will be willing to forsake any worldly interest for him.

Fifthly, Get your hearts filled with the divine sweetneses of the Ordinances. O Lord, saith *Austin*, when once thy sweetness came into my Soul, how sweet was it to me to want my own sweetneses! Oh! when the sweetneses of God shall come into our Souls, this begets Love; and much water cannot quench Love. Go therefore and labour to get your hearts filled with Divine sweetneses.

Sixthly, Whatsoever you do now in a way of service, do it because your Father wills it. If you

do therefore serve God now because your Father wills it; then when you come to suffer, you will willingly suffer, because your Father wills it. So that now, use your selves to this, to serve all your service upon this score, because my Father wills it.

Seventhly, Take heed that you do not stand beshing of a sin, or of an error, and glossing of a suffering. What's the reason that many are so unwilling to suffer? The reason on't is this: they lessen the error and the sin in the yeilding; and they aggravate and greater the suffering. O faith one, is this a great matter, to yeild in such a thing as this? tis an indifferent thing; but if I don't yeild, I am undone for ever. But take heed of this, that you do not lessen the sin, and aggravate your suffering: for you will never be willing to suffer for the name of Christ, if this be your way.

Eighthly, If you would be willing to suffer for the Name of Christ, then go unto God in prayer, and pray unto God for boldness; and go to your friends, and beg of them to pray for you. I remember when *Latimer* was to suffer, he call'd upon his friends, Pray friends, pray for me; for sometimes, though I am as bold as a Lyon, yet at another time I am so afraid, as I could run into a Mouse-hole. Therefore say, Come, O my friends, I have a cowardly heart of my own, and am unwilling to suffer for the Name of Jesus Christ: O friends, pray for me, and go to God and pray for boldness: for you see how it was in the 4th of the *Acts*, they told their own Company what the Priests said to them; And now, Lord, say they, Behold their threatenings; and what

what did they pray for? Grant that with all boldness we may speak thy word: And what was the issue? In the next verse: The room was shaken, and they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness. God answered their prayer presently. Therefore if the Enemies threaten; and you are afraid to suffer for the Name of Christ, get together, and in the midst of all your Petitions, put up this to the Throne of Grace, O Lord, give us boldness.

Ninthly, If you would be willing to suffer for the name of Christ, O then read over the sufferings of others, and how others have offered up their worldly interests to the name of Christ; and by reading their sufferings, you will be made willing to suffer as they were: *Having such a cloud of witnesses*, saith the Apostle; he speaks of suffering-Saints.

Tenthly, Improve all your afflictions to the mortification of your mind, and of your will: Take this for certain; truly, the more your own mind and will is alive, the more you will be unwilling to suffer for the Name of Christ. Well, how shall I mortifie my own will? Afflictions will help you do it. Affliction! Whats affliction? Affliction is all that that is contrary to ones will; thereby God eats out the core of our wills. Whensoever therefore you meet with any affliction, pray over it, and beg that God would eat out the core of your wills thereby: and the more the core of your wills is eaten out, the more willing will you be to suffer for the name of Jesus Christ.

Eleventhly, And then to draw to a conclusion, that you may be willing to suffer for the
Name

Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, lay these things and this great reward wisely upon your hearts, and thereby you will be made more willing. You see how it is with a man that's going to Court, he rides through this plash, and the other plash; I am going to Court, and there I shall be made a man, if I get but thither. Why, truly we are going to the Court of the King of Kings, and these sufferings that we meet withal, are the plashes by the way. But Christians, there's enough in heaven to pay for all. *Luther* said, Let him be miserable, that can be miserable. So you that suffer for the Name of Christ, you cannot be miserable, Christ hath pronounc'd you blessed, and you shall be blessed: and you see what a reward here is in the Text, *An hundredfold in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting.*

I shall only say, this is the parting Speech: There is no loss in loosing for Jesus Christ; whatsoever you do loose for Christ, you shall find it infinitely in Christ: Christ and a little, is a great deal. The only way to have a mercy, is to be content to go without it: And the only way to prevent a misery, is to be willing to endure it. Now therefore, if you would prevent suffering, be willing to suffer for the Name of Jesus Christ.

And thus you see what the means are to be made willing. And so I have done with this Answer of Christ. In this part of the Answer you see how we may be made willing to suffer for Christ; and in the cautionall part, some of you heard how we should so order our sufferings, as that they might turn to a good account.

Now, *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.*

THE TWO WITNESSES.
SERM. IV.

The two VVitnesses, their
Testimony.

Rev. 11. ver. 3. &c. *And I will give
Power unto my two Witnesses, &c.*

AND *I will give Power unto my two Witnesses*
That is, unto the inner Court, and those
that Worship there, spoken of before—
The whole Church of God under the
name of the Temple, speaking in the
Jewish Language.

The whole Church of God under the name of a
Temple, is divided into the outer, and the inner
Court. The Inner Court is measured, and the Al-
tar, and those that Worship there, in ver. 1.

The outward Court is left out, and given unto the
Gentiles, and they tread down the Holy City fourty
and two Moneths, ver. 2. But saith Christ, *I will
give power unto my two Witnesses*: that is, unto the in-
ner Court, and those that were measured, of which
he had spoken before.

Called *Witnesses*. No sooner is the Holy City
troden underfoot by the Gentiles, but Christs Wit-

nesses, do begin to bear their testimony to Christ.

The Witnessing time is divided into three parts.

—A Propheying time. The time of their Prophe-
sie, from the third verse unto the seventh.

The Slaying time, from the third verse unto the
11th.

The rising time, and restoring time, from the 11.
verse unto the 14. So that in this Scripture that I
have now read, you have the state of the Church Pro-
phesying, or Witnessing in the dayes of Anti-Christ,
called Witnesses: who are here described,

First by their number *Two*. I will give power unto
my two Witnesses.

Secondly by their Work and Office, *And they shall
Prophesey*.

Thirdly, By their mournful and sad habit and con-
dition, and the time thereof, *They shall Prophesey
1260 dayes clothed in Sackcloth.*

Fourthly, By their quality. *These are the two O-
live Trees, and the two Candlesticks standing before the
God of the Earth, ver. 14.*

Fifthly, By their Guard, and by their Defence,
*And if any man will hurt them, Fire proceedeth out of their
mouth, and devoureth their Enemies, ver. 5.*

Sixthly, By the great things that they shall do, in
the latter end of their Prophecie. *These have power to
shut Heavens, that is rain, not in the dayes of their Prophe-
sie, and have power over waters to turn them into Blood, &c.
So that now from all this, I take up this one Obser-
vation*

Obsero. Though the Saints and Faithful Witen-
ses of Jesus Christ must lye in Sackcloth 1260 dayes,
or years; yet in that time they shall be very fruitful,
and Prophecie, and do great things in the end of
those dayes.

For the clearing whereof, five or six things will fall under our consideration.

First, Why the Saints and People of God are called Witnesses.

Secondly, What these Witnesses are : more especially in respect of their number, and quality.

Thirdly, How and in what respect they are clothed in Sackcloth, and how long.

Fourthly, What this Prophecie is, and how it comes to pass that they Prophecie in the time of their Sackcloth.

Fifthly, What is their Defence and Guard where-with they are Guarded and Defended in the daies of their Prophecie.

Sixthly, What are the great things that they shall do in the latter end of their Prophecie. (I shall run through these particulars as briefly as I may), And

First, If you ask why the Saints and people of God are here called Witnesses.

I answer, Because it is their work and business to bear Witness to the truths and wayes of Christ, in opposition to the wayes of Anti-Christ. If you look into this Book of the *Revelations*, you will find they are so described, by bearing witness unto the wayes and the truths of Christ, in opposition to the wayes of Anti-Christ. For look but a little into this Book, and you shall find that there are two sorts of people that are marked : The followers of the Beast are marked, and the followers of the Lamb are marked in their Foreheads.

The followers of the Beast are marked, in *Rev.* 13. 16. *And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a Mark in their right hand, or in their Foreheads.*

The Followers of the Lamb are marked in their

Foreheads too, chap. 14. ver. 1. And I looked, and lo a Lamb stood on the Mount Sion, and with him 144000 having his Fathers Name written in their Foreheads. But now though the followers of the Lamb are thus marked with their Fathers Name written in their Foreheads, yet their mark doth not only consist in some thing that is positive, but in *Refusing the mark of the Beast*, Rev. 20.—why, but to shew thus much, That they are witnesses upon this account, because they do bear witness unto Christ, the truth and wayes of Christ, in opposition to the wayes of Anti-Christ. Thus they are conformed unto Jesus Christ, who is the *True and the Faithful witness*, Rev. 3. *writes, These things saith the Amen, the true and Faithful witness.* That is, *Christ*: Christ is the true and the faithful witness, and therefore those that are his, they must be witnesses too, that they may be conformed to him.

Thereby they also overcome, as you have it in *Rev. 12. And they overcame him by the Blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony.* They overcome by the Blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, by witness-bearing. So then, the Saints and people of God, they are Christs witnesses. In Anti-Christian times, they are Christs witnesses: and if they be thus described, why then should not we look unto this work especially, Bearing of witness to the truths and wayes of Christ.

This is the work that we are born for: For this cause, saith Christ, was I born, and for this cause came I into the World, that I might bear witness unto the truth.

This is the work of our Generation, witness-bearing to the truths of Christ in opposition to the wayes of Anti-Christ, in Anti-Christian times. This is the work of our Generation.

This

This is the work which there is a thousand years of glory and comfort promised unto above other things; as you read in *Rev. 20.*

This is the work, Witness-bearing to the truths of Christ, in opposition to the wayes of Anti-Christ. This is the work that hath the Crown and Name of Martyrdom. A Martyr, whats that but a Witness. Every witness more or less, is a Martyr: We take the word only for them that dye, But every witness is a Martyr.

This is that work which sometimes is necessary to Salvation, *Rom. 10. 10.* For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto Salvation. This is the work I say therefore that sometimes is necessary unto Salvation.

And this is that work which Jesus Christ will own, and acknowledg before all the world. *He that confesseth me before men, him will I confess before my Father and all the Angels in Heaven.*

And if this be the great work, why should we not all of us look to this work especially, this witness-bearing?

You will say, what shall I do that I may be found faithful in this witness-bearing? what shall I do that I may witness a good confession in these dayes of ours?

Something by way of Rule—Something by way of means; and yet not long, because I must pass on to other things.

Rule 1. Something by way of Rule. Be sure that your testimonies do agree. Though there be 100 Witnesses about a business, if their witness don't agree, 'twill be of little worth. And now to it is, Christs Witnesses this day are divided into many Opinions and Perswasions, but they may agree in the

main for Christ, they may all agree in opposition unto Anti-Christ. If that you would have your witness valid and good, labour you that are the witnesses, for unity in your testimony. *There are three, saith the Apostle John, that bear witness in Heaven, speaking of Gods testifying of the truth of Grace. These are three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: these bear witness of Christ, and their witness is good,—why—For these three are One, 1 Joh. 5. 7. And saith he at the 8. v. There are three that bear witness on earth, the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood. The Spirit: I come to know that I am the child of God by the testimony of the Spirit, bearing witness with my Spirit that I am the child of God.—And I come to know that I am the child of God by the witness of water, by the testimony of Sanctification.—And I come to know that I am the child of God by the testimony of Blood, by the testimony of my Faith, relying upon the Blood of Christ. And these three agree: and these three agree in One. The testimony is good, because they agree in one. So in our testifying of Christ, If our testimonies do agree, our testimony is good: that's the first thing. We have him too much divided, God knows we have, and he hath punished our Divisions with Divisions; 'tis time to unite our testimony: If you would bear witness, unite your testimony.*

2. If you would witness a good confession in these dayes of ours, then you must be willing to own the truth of Christ, to own it whensoever you are called thereto: 'tis said, our Saviour Christ he witnesseth a good Confession before Pontius Pilate.—Pray what kind of witness was it—was it any long confession, or large,—no; But the manner on't was this, when

when they call'd him before them to give an account of any fact, he left them to prove it. When they call'd him to give an account of the Doctrine that he held, *Art thou the King of the Jews*; then he owned it. He left them to prove the fact, and he owned the truth; so should we do. And indeed, if that we be not willing for to own the truth when we are call'd thereunto, why how can it be that the mark of the Father should be written upon our Foreheads only. We read of the followers of the Beast, that they received a mark in their right hands, and in their Foreheads both: — why in the Forehead, and why in the hand? In the Forehead, sometimes to wear it openly. — And in their right hands, to put it into their pockets, and to hide it. They can own it sometimes, and sometimes they can hide it: — but the followers of the Lamb, they have the mark of their Father only in their Forehead. Therefore I say, If we would witness a good Confession, we must be willing to own the truth whensoever we are call'd thereunto.

3. If you would witness a good Confession in these dayes of ours, then you must be willing also for to suffer for the truth of Christ. Those that cannot suffer for the truth of Christ, and run the hazard of a suffering, they cannot bear their witness fully. See how they go together, in *Rev. 13. 10. Have the patience and Faith of the Saints.* The Faith of the Saints, and their Patience, do go together: — so in *chap. 14. ver. 12. Here is the Patient of the Spirit, here are they that keep the Commandments of God, and the Faith of Jesus.* Patience, and keeping the Commandments of God, and the Faith of Jesus, they go together. And therefore that's a third thing.

4. If you would witness a good Confession, then

take heed that when you have borne your testimony, you do nothing that may revoke the same, either directly or by consequence. Some bear a good testimony to the truths of Christ, but then they revoke their testimony by something that they do afterwards, either directly or by consequence. Mark what is said of John in John. 10. 'tis said of him, *He confessed and denyed not, but confessed, I am not the Christ.* He confessed, and did not revoke his testimony. *He confessed, & denyed not, but confessed, I know there's an Hebraism in it, but there's more than so.* And he confessed and denyed not. He bore his testimony, and did nothing that might revoke that testimony, either directly or by consequence. And therefore if you would bear your testimony for the truth of Christ, take heed that when you have given in your testimony, you do nothing that may revoke it, either directly or by consequence. Thus by way of Rule.

And secondly, by way of Means. If you would be Faithful in bearing your testimony, in bearing witness to the truths of Christ, in opposition to the ~~works~~ of Anti-Christ: Observe what the root is that a good confession grows upon, and labour for to strengthen that.

Now what is the root that a good confession grows upon, but Faith working by Love.

As for Faith, *I believed, and therefore have I spoken.*

And as for Love, *Much Water cannot quench Love.* Faith working by Love, is the root that a good Confession grows upon, and therefore strengthen that.

Secondly, Labour in the work of Self-denial, and use your self now to deny your self. There are two denials that you read of in the Gospel — one *commanded*, and the other *forbidden*, directly contrary one to another.

Self-

Self-denial—and denial of Christ. Self-denial is commanded; If any man will be my Disciple, let him deny himself.

Denying of Christ is forbidden: He that denies me before men, I will deny before my Father which is in Heaven. The more you deny your selves, the less you will deny Christ: And the more you deny Christ, the less you deny your selves. Will you not deny Christ, but witness fully to Christ, and the truths and wayes of Christ; labour now to be found in the wayes of self-denial, that you may be kept from Christ-denial.

Thirdly, In the next place, Take heed that you be not feared or feared too much with the feare: crowes loſt their time; but go to God for boldness; that you may be emboldned with the boldness of the Holy Ghost. A timorous fearful Spirit will shrink in witness-bearing, if God come not in with boldness. You may see how they would have made Nehemiah to have ceased from the work of God, even by scaring and fearing of him, in Neh. 5. Tobiah and Sanballat they send unto him that they might make him cease from the work of God that was in his hand; and they say unto him, It is reported that thou hast appointed to Preach in Jerusalem, saying, There is a King in Jerusalem, and now shall it be reported to the King according to these words, Jer. 7. here they cry out, A Plot, a Plot: But while they cry out a Plot upon Nehemiah, the truth is, it was their own Plot. Then I sent unto them (at ver. 8.) saying, There are no such things done as thou sayest, but thou feignest them of thine own heart. They cry A Plot, and they made a Plot. Well, what was their Plot?—It was to make him cease from the work of the Lord.—And how did they lay the Plot, say they at ver. 9. For they all made

as afraid, saying, Their hands shall be weakened from the
 work. They all made us afraid, v. 12. (speaking of
 false Prophets) Therefore we be hired, that I should be
 afraid, and do so, and so. And saith he, ver. 14. My
 God, think thou upon Tobiah and Sanballat, according to
 these their works, and on the Prophets, Noadiah, and
 the rest of the Prophets that would have put us in fear.
 This was the way to make Nehemiah cease from the
 work of God that was in his hand, to put him in fear,
 to scare him. And therefore take heed of the scares
 of the times, but go to God for boldness, that you may
 be emboldned with the boldness of the Holy Ghost.
 And therefore do but read the fourth of the Acts,
 where you find, that when the Apostles were threaten-
 ned, they returned unto their own company, and fell
 to Prayer, at ver. 23. And being let go, they went
 to their own company, and there they fell to Prayer.
 And they lift up their voice. And what did they
 pray for? the great thing that they prayed for in
 their Prayer, was, That God would give them bold-
 ness. And now Lord, say they, ver. 28. Behold their
 threatenings, and grant unto thy Servants, that with all
 boldness they may speak thy Word. And what was the
 Answer, ver. 31. And when they had prayed, the place
 was shaken: where they were assembled together, and they
 were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the
 Word of God with boldness. This was the Petition put
 up, Behold Lord their threatenings, now give boldness to
 thy Servants. Presently God answered, and they were
 filled with the boldness of the Holy Ghost, and so
 they have their testimony. And so I say, If you
 would bear your testimony in these dayes of ours,
 take heed of being scared and scared with the scare-
 bowes of the times. But rather go to God, and
 beg boldness of him, that you may be emboldned
 with

with the boldness of the Holy Ghost; and thus shall you do this great work, which is the work that we have to do in this day of ours. And so I have done with the first thing; why the Saints and people of God are called witnesses, Namely, because it is their work in Anti-Christian times to bear witness to the truths and wayes of Christ, in opposition to the wayes of Anti-Christ.

But then secondly, What are these Witnesses more expressly in regard of their number, and in regard of their quality?

First in regard of their number; They are two, And I will give power unto my TWO witnesses. Two is but a few, and yet it is enough to bear witness, For out of the mouths of two or three Witnesses shall every word be established.

Two, as few, and yet enough. The Note is this.

Observe Christ will always have enough to bear witness to his Truth in the darkest times. When the Gentiles tread underfoot the Holy City, yet here are two, his but a few, and indeed Christ's Witnesses they are not very many; they are but few.

In the Old Testament, unless the Lord shall visit, there shall be a Remnant, a very little Remnant.

And in the New Testament, *Members of the true Church* in *Sardis*; Christ's Witnesses are not very many; they are but few; Two.

And yet they are enough; Two are enough to bear witness unto a thing; they are enough. Christ though he have but few to bear witness to his truth, he will always have enough to bear witness to his truth in the darkest times; in the darkest times of Anti-Christ.

What

What then? though many fall off, and go over to Anti-christ's Colours, Christ will have enough to bear witness: In the 24. of *Math.* 'tis said, *Many shall be offended; And Many shall be deceived; And the Love of Many shall grow cold.* But [*he*] that endures to the end: he doth not say, but *Thy* that endure to the end, but *He*. There is an *He* upon that, *Many* shall be deceived, and *Many* shall be offended, and the love of *Many* shall grow cold. But *He* that shall endure to the end. But yet an *He*;

Why should we be afraid and discouraged in reference to the Cause of God, and the Affairs of the Church: It may be we think few or none will stand in this dark and gloomy day, few or none will stand,

But I pray now, have you cast up the account how many are wanting upon the Muster? In the 14. *Rev.* In the 7th. chap. The Saints are mustered before they go into the times of Anti-christ in 14. And I heard the number of them which were sealed, and there were sealed 144000. And then in the 9. 10. 11. 12. chapters, comes in the times of Anti-christ, and bloody times. Now in the 14. chap. vers. 1. They are accounted over after the times of Anti-christ; and how many are wanting. And I looked, and lo a Lamb stood on the Mount Sion, and with him 144000. having his Father's Name written in their foreheads, where's now are wanting. Christ will lose not one; not one lost. By all this persecution, of Anti-christ, the Church shall not lose one: In the latter end, here's just as many to an One, as was in the beginning. We think few or none will stand in these daies: So *Elisha* thought, and *only an* left of *Israel*, but he was deceived: There's 7000. men that will not bow the knee to *Baal*. And so we may think,

think, few or none will stand, but we may be deceived, God hath his seven thousand that we know not off. Though but few, yet enough, Christ will alwaies have enough to bear witness to his Truth in the darkest times, Two Witnesses. This for their Number.

But then Secondly, As for their qualification,

For their quality: *These are the two Olive-trees, at the 4. verse (I shall speak to all these things, within the compass of my Doctrine) And the two Candle-sticks standing before the God of the Earth.*

What's that? These are the Olive-trees: Why if you look into *Zech.* from whence this is taken, you shall find the two Olive-trees are the godly Magistrates and Ministers, by whose assistance the golden Oyl is emptied into the Candle-sticks, and Lamps. Having spoken of the Candlestick of gold, at the 2d. vers. of that 4. of *Zech.* And of two Olive-trees by it; at the 3d. vers. At the 11. verse: Then answered I, and said unto him, what are these two Olive-trees upon the right side of the Candlestick, and upon the left side thereof? And I answered again, and said unto him, what be these two Olive-branches which through the two golden pipes, empty the golden Oyle one of themselves? And he answered me, and said, knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No my Lord: Then said he, These are the two annointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole Earth— The two annointed ones— What's that?—Why the Magistrates were annointed, and the High-Priests were annointed. Zerubbabel and Joshua were the two annointed ones—

That stand by the Lord of the whole Earth: What's that? that are publick Ministers. So then, these two Olive-trees are the godly Magistrate, and the godly Minister.

But

But what are the two Candlesticks? These are the two Olive-trees, and the two Candlesticks.

Our Saviour tells you that the seven Golden Candlesticks, are the seven Churches. They were seven: Now in Anti-christian times reduced to a lesser company, two Candlesticks: Though as I said before, Christ will lose none in the latter times; yet in Antichristian times reduced into two.

These are the two Candlesticks: Christ tells you the Candlesticks are the Churches: So then put this together: Would you know what these two Olive-trees are, and the two Candlesticks? They are the godly Magistrate and godly Minister in conjunction with the Saints of God and Churches of Christ. The two Olive-trees are the godly Magistrate and the Ministry: The Candlesticks are the Churches and Saints of God. The godly Magistrate and Minister, in conjunction with the Churches and Saints of God. The godly Magistrate alone, is not it: Nor the Ministry alone, is not it: Nor good people and Saints alone, is not it: Here are two Olive-trees, and two Candlesticks: So that would you know what these are? They are the godly Magistrate, and Minister, in conjunction with the Saints of God, and Churches of Jesus Christ.

And then if so, That these be the Witnesses,

Here we may see who these are that are fit to bear witness of Christ in Antichristian times, to bear their Testimony. — They are to be a fruitful, profitable people, And a lightsome people, that can hold forth light unto others in some measure. — What more fruitful and profitable than the Olive-tree? There's nothing unprofitable; The Bark, Oyl; the Leaf, Oyl; the Body, Oyl; the Fruit, Oyl; nothing unprofitable: So the Saints of God, they are

are the Sons and Daughters of Oyl, nothing but profit. The wicked indeed are compared to the *green Bay-tree*; barren, unprofitable: But the Godly are compared in Scripture to the *Olive-tree*; nothing not profitable: The Wicked are compared to *Goats*, the Saints are compared to *Sheep*: Sheep, nothing not profitable: Their wool profitable, their flesh profitable, their very dung profitable: Nothing not profitable: And here, the Witnesses of Christ, they are the *Olive-tree*; fruitful, and a profitable people; and a people in some measure fit to give light to others, as the *Candlestick*, to hold forth light unto others.

Beloved, Truly every one is not fit to bear witness to the Cause, and the Truths, and the Waies of Jesus Christ: A man may be a Protestant, in opposition to the Papists, and yet an ignorant man; A man may be a Professor, in opposition unto others, and yet barren in his life. No, no, none are fit to bear testimony to the Truths of Christ, and the Waies of Christ, in opposition to the waies of Anti-christ, but the Olive and the Candlestick; The profitable man and the lightesome man: and therefore in evil times that you may be fit to bear witness to the Waies of Jesus Christ in opposition to the Waies of Anti-christ, labour to be Sons and Daughters of Oyl; labour to be more fruitful and profitable in your life; *And let your light so shine before men, that they may glorify your Father which is in Heaven.* And so now I have done with the second thing, What these Witnesses are, More particularly in respect of their number, Two; In respect of their quality, They are two *Olive-trees*, and two *Candlesticks*.

But then Thirdly, It is here said that they shall
Prophecie

Propheſie 1260. daies, clothed in Sackcloth; that they ſhall lie in Sackcloth, and lie in Sackcloth 1260 daies; and ſhall ſee the Lord, and ſhall be ſaved.

In Sackcloth,--What's that--And how 1260 daies?

If you aſk what this Sackcloth means: It repreſents the ſad, and afflicted, and mournful condition that the Saints and people of God ſhall be in, in Antichriſtian times. When the Jews of old mourned, and were afflicted, they put on Sackcloth; The Princes put on Sackcloth, and the Priests put on Sackcloth, and the people put on Sackcloth; So here, the Witneſſes clothed in Sackcloth;--What doth this mean, but their ſad, and afflicted, and mournful condition? Such it is, and muſt be in Antichriſtian times.

For is it not a ſad thing, and mournful, for the holy City to be troden underfoot by the Gentiles? ſo it ſhall be in Antichriſtian times.

Is it not a ſad and mournful thing for the Church of God to be hidden, the inner Court to be hidden? Indeed a hidden Church is a true Church; a ſcattered Flock is a true Flock, and a ſcattered Church is a true Church: But is it not a ſad thing for Churches to be hidden; the Church of God to be hidden? Why ſo it muſt be in Antichriſtian times.

I remember Mr. *Brightman* ſaith, when the Woman is in the Wilderneſs, ſhe muſt not think that there will be Congregations ſo viſible; but in a Wilderneſs here and there, or in a Forreſt, here and there is a houſe; and here and there you meet with a man; But you meet not with great Towns, and Corporations in a Wilderneſs, or in a Forreſt; So when the Church is in the Wilderneſs, here and there a knot of Saints, and here and there a knot of meeting,

meeting : But Corporations and Churches then are hidden: Is it not a sad thing now I say ? Yet thus it must be.

Is it not a sad thing for the Vessels of the Temple to be defiled ? So it must be in Antichristian times.

Is it not a sad thing for the solemn Assemblies to lie under reproach ? So it is and must be in Antichristian times.

Is it not a sad thing for the Saints and People of God, and the Daughters and Sons of *Sion* to be persecuted to the very Gates of *Sion*, yea into the very Gates of their Trade ? So it is and must be in Antichristian times : and therefore no wonder that the Witnesses lie in Sackcloth.

But then they lie in Sackcloth 1260 daies, - what's that ? That is 1260 years, a day being put for a year, as it is ordinary in Scripture:

And if you ask, When doth this time begin, or end, that we may know where we are ?

Answer : If you can find the beginning from whence this time doth commence, you will soon find the end : --- now these 1260 daies or years, are all one with the 42 Months (spoken of before) that the Gentiles shall tread down the holy City : They are all one with the 42 months of the Beast. Take a day for a year, and 42 months come to 1260 years ; take a day for a month, and then 1260 daies comes to 42 months.

These 42 months of the Beast then, and the 1260 daies or years that the Witnesses are clothed in Sackcloth are all one.

Now, when did the 42 months of the Beast begin ?

In likelyhood about the year 400 or 406 or 10
I or

or thereabouts, for to speak to a year or so, is not safe, Chronologers have been deceived: I say in the year of our Lord 400, or thereabouts.

For look when that that hinders was taken away, then the man of sin was discovered: The mystery of iniquity did work in the Apostles time: In *2 Thes. 2. The mystery of iniquity doth already work* verse 7. *Only he who now letteth, will let until he be taken out of the way, and then shall that wicked one be revealed:* —When is that? As *Jerom* and all agree, the *Roman Empire* was the thing that let, and about those times was the *Roman Empire* taken out of the way; In 410. the *Goths* and *Vandals* broke in upon *Rome* it self, about that time was that that let taken away.

And Secondly, (I do but touch upon this, and touch I must upon it) look when the *Roman Empire* did fall asunder into ten Kingdoms, then did the Beast begin his forty two months, *Rev. 17. 12. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten Kings, which have received no Kingdom as yet, But receive power as Kings one hour with the Beast.*

But when did the *Roman Empire* fall asunder into ten Kingdoms? About the year 400. 'Tis observed by good Historians, and divers, that in the year 406. *Brittany* and these Nations fell off from the *Roman Empire*, to be a Kingdom standing by it self. —Now then, if the time did begin about 400. surely the end of the time we must needs be about. I confess indeed: It is a sad thing for Christ's Witnesses to lie in Sackcloth; and to lie in Sackcloth 1260. years, but so it must be, not a day abated, but to a year, to a day. Why should you be offended friends then, at the Sackcloth and mourning condition of the Church, and Saints, and People

People of God? — Why, is not this the habit of the Witnesses, *Sackcloth*: and will not you be content to be habited as they are habited, as Christ's Witnesses are habited, to wear the same clothes that Christ's Witnesses do? And if Christ's Witnesses shall lie in Sackcloth 1260. years, will not you be contented to be in Sackcloth three or four years? Christians, will not you be contented to be in Sackcloth three or four years? Methinks we should rather look to the duty of a Sackcloth condition; there should our hearts and our thoughts be: But we are very apt evermore, (and consider what I say, not only in reference to this point, but to others) we are very apt to mind Gods work, and neglect our own: 'Tis Gods work to fulfil the Promise, 'tis our work to apply the Promise; but we mind the fulfilling on't, and neglect the applying on't; mind Gods work, and neglect our own work.

'Tis Gods work to deliver his people, 'tis their work to be humbled under the mighty hand of God; But we mind deliverance, which is Gods work, and neglect our own work, humiliation under the mighty hand of God.

'Tis Gods work (saith the Martyr) to *take care*, 'tis our work to *cast care*: *Cast all your care upon God*; there's your work: *for he careth for you*, that's Gods work. To take care is Gods work, to cast care is our work, but we mind Gods work, and are taking care, and neglect our own work, which is to cast all our care upon God.

'Tis Gods work to take off our Sackcloth, 'tis our work to wear it; but we mind Gods work, the taking of it off: When shall this Sackcloth be off? and neglect our own work, to wear it handsomely.

— Why should we not I say, mind our business?

what is the duty of a Sackcloth condition more?

Why then, when we are in Sackcloth, surely then 'tis our duty for to lay by our Ornaments: *Let the Bridegroom go out of his Chamber*, in the day of Sackcloth; if any body may rejoyce, the Bridegroom may; But let the Bridegroom go forth of his chamber in a Sackcloth day: Lay aside your Ornaments friends, lay aside your Ornaments: In the time of Sackcloth, 'tis our duty then for to fast and pray, and cry mightily unto the Lord.

Then 'tis our duty to put our mouths in the dust, if so be there may be hope.

Then it is our duty for to bear our Testimony.

Then it is our duty for to wait on God; though the Witnesses wear Sackcloth for a time, yet there are white Robes provided for them, and they come out with Palms in their hands.

And the nearer the time of Deliverance grows, the less time for waiting, the more we are engaged to wait: Why now according to the calculation, there is not much of the time to come; there is but a little of the Sackcloth time to come, shall we not watch with him one hour, and wear Sackcloth with him one hour? wait a while, he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry. And so I have done with the third thing; namely, what this Sackcloth is, and their lying in Sackcloth for 1260 years.

4. But then in the fourth place, It is said here, that these Witnesses did Prophecie: *I will give power unto my two Witnesses, and they shall Prophecie*—Prophecie—What's that? and how did it come to pass; that they shall Prophecie in the time of their Sackcloth.

Pro-

Propheſie, —What's that?

Why Propheſying is ſometimes taken in Scripture for the Revelation of the mind of God, whereby a man doth foretel things to come, and ſo *Daniel* and *Ezekiel*, and others were called Prophets.

Sometimes Propheſying is taken more largely in Scripture, for Preaching the Word of God in a way of Office; Preaching the Word by Office: And ſo the Miniſters and Preachers of the Word of God in Office, they are called Prophets in Scripture.

But Thirdly, yet more largely: Propheſie is took for a declaring and making known of the Mind and Will of God, and ſo all thoſe that do declare and make known the Mind and Will of Jeſus Chriſt, they are ſaid to be Prophets, and ſo I take it here: For I pray do but mark, This their Propheſying and Witneſs-bearing ſeems to be all one: I will give power unto my two Witneſſes, and they ſhall Propheſie: —And when they ſhall have finiſhed their Teſtimony, their witneſs-bearing; He ſhould have ſaid, when they have finiſhed their Propheſie: True, But he would ſhew that their Witneſs-bearing and Propheſie is all one; And ſo compare chap. 19. and chap. 22. of the Revelations together, and you will find the ſame, *I fell at his feet and worſhipped him, and he ſaid unto me, ſee thou do it not, I am thy fellow ſervant, and of thy Brethren, that have the teſtimony of Jeſus: and chap. 22. I fell at his feet, and he ſaid unto me ſee thou do it not, for I am thy fellow ſervant, and of thy Brethren the Prophets; Of thy Brethren the Prophets, here in chap. 22. is all one, with thy Brethren that have the Teſtimony of Jeſus, In the 19th. and ſaith he there, Worſhip God, for the Teſtimony of Jeſus, is the Spirit of Propheſie: It's the ſame word that's uſed, when they had*
 I 3 finished

finished their *Testimony*, or *Witness-bearing*: The witness of Jesus, is the Spirit of Prophecie: This bearing witness to the truths of Jesus, this is Prophecie: And thus now the Witnesses, they are said to Prophecie.

Well, but how come they to Prophecie in the times of their Sackcloth.

Behold, I will give power unto my two Witnesses, and they shall Prophecie 1260. daies clothed in Sackcloth: How comes it to pass that they shall Prophecie in Sackcloth?

It's clearly answered, *I will give power* (saith Christ) *I will give power unto my two Witnesses, and they shall Prophecie in Sackcloth. I will give power to them; they shall have their Orders to Preach from my self; They shall have power from Me to Preach and to Prophecie, and to bear their Testimony; Some have their Orders and their Power to Prophecie from Men; from Prelats, from the Beast; but (saith he) I will give power unto my two Witnesses to Prophecie: It's said of the Beast, That Power was given him: It's said of the Witnesses, I will give Power unto my two Witnesses: They shall have their Orders, they shall have their Power of Prophecie and Witness-bearing from my self: I will give Power unto my two Witnesses. Plainly then thus much.*

Obs. There's none can bear witness to the Truths of Jesus Christ, but those that are impowred by Christ, and if that Jesus Christ will give power unto his two Witnesses for to Prophecie, and to bear their Testimony, then why should we not depend on God? why should we not go unto Christ, and depend on Christ, for our very Power to bear Witness to the Truths of Christ.

It may be you are afraid, and you will say thus: I am a poor weak Creature, man or woman, and I shall never be able for to bear a Testimony in these witness-bearing times?

I but you know what the Martyr said, I'll set my foot against the foot of the proudest Prelate of them all in the cause of Christ: But who gave power unto her; — *Jesus Christ* that saith, I will give power unto my two Witnesses; and he hath said so concerning all his Witnesses: I will give power unto my two Witnesses, that they shall Prophecie, and bear witness; and he is faithful: and therefore why should you not go to Christ, and lay your selves flat upon this Promise, and say to him: O Lord, I am a poor weak Creature; I fear I shall never be able for to bear my Testimony, but thou hast said, I will give power unto my two Witnesses; I am one of thy Witnesses: Now then O Lord, give power to me, for I am poor; O remember this Promise, here's a gracious and a blessed Promise: Christ saith himself, I will give power unto my two Witnesses, and he is faithful, and will make it good. And so I have done with the fourth thing, namely, what Propheying is, and how the Witnesses come to Prophecie in the times of their Sackcloth; Christ gives them power.

- 5. But then Fifthly, what is the defence and guard that these Witnesses have, whereby they are guarded and defended in their Prophecie.

The Text saith, If any man will hurt them, fire Proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: — What's that? Fire proceedeth out of their mouth; It may relate unto *Moses*; but especially it relates unto *Elijah*, a Prophet, a Minister,

nister, that when the Captain and his fifty came to do him hurt, he called for fire from Heaven, and destroyed the Captain and his fifty; fire came out of his mouth by his prayers: and when another Captain came, and his fifty, *Elijah* prayed, and fire came down and destroyed him and his fifty: Fire came out of his mouth; plainly it relates to this of *Elijah*.

What then is this fire that proceeds out of the mouth of the Witnesses, but the scorching and devouring Judgements of God, whereby the Enemies of Gods people are blasted and destroyed by the prayers and threatnings of the people of God, that come out of their mouth.

But if any man will hurt them, mind a little.

It seems then first, That there will alwaies be some in readines to hurt the witnessing people of Christ, though they be impowered to witness from Christ himself. Though the Saints and People of God be impowered by Christ himself for to bear their Testimony: There will alwaies be some or other to hurt the witnessing people of God. *If any man will hurt them*, Them that are Witnesses.

But Secondly, though men do hurt the witnessing people of God, they shall not go unpunished: *If any man will hurt them, fire proceeds out of their mouths, and devoureth their enemies*: Though the enemies may hurt the witnessing people of Christ, the enemies shall be hurt themselves, they shall not go unpunished.

But Thirdly, They shall not only be punished that hurt the witnessing people of God: But they shall be punished with a So; He must in *this manner*, or So, he must So be punished: —So— how so? So, look in what way he thought to have hurt the witnessing

witnessing people of God: So shall he be hurt, look by what mens he sought to hurt the people of God, by the same hand and means shall he be hurt himself.

But So, so by fire coming out of their mouth; by the prayers of the people of God, they shall be blasted and consumed; not by sword, not by might, nor by strength, but by fire coming out of their mouth, So, So, he shall not only be punished, but be punished with a *so*, that hurts the witnessing people of God.

Oh my beloved friends, why do you shut your mouths? why should you not be much in prayer? what doth fire come out of the mouth of the witnessing people of God to devour their enemies, and will you shut your mouth, and not pray?

Oh! where will Opposers appear; what will become of those that hurt the witnessing people of God, O wo to them?

Oh! what a dangerous thing is it to oppose the prayers of the people of God? This is the fire that comes out of their mouth, whereby those that hurt them are scorched: And therefore let men take heed how they hurt any of the witnessing people of Christ; and let all those that are witnesses pray; You that are witnesses now open your mouths, for fire proceedeth out of your mouths, to devour the enemies that hurt the witnessing people of God; Open your mouths wide. And so I have done with the fifth thing; The Guard whereby the Witnesses are guarded in the daies of their Prophecie.

6. The sixth thing remains, and that is, what are the great things that these Witnesses will do, in the end of the daies of their Prophecie, and of their Sackcloth.

Why briefly thus: In the genral 'tis said: These have

have power to smite the Earth with all plagues, as often as they will: That is, as I humbly conceive, pouring out the seven Vials, in Rev. 16. the seven Vials are poured out upon the earth: and why is it spoken of here, That they have power to smite the earth with all Plagues? But to shew that at least some of the Vials shall be poured out, before the Witnesses are slain: But not to fix there, more particularly.

First, These have a power to shut Heaven, that it rain not, in the daies of their Prophecie: What's that? Certainly, it must relate unto *Elijah*: That *Elijah* prayed, and by his prayer he shut the Heavens that it rained not for three years and an half: Plainly it relates unto *Elijah* as can be: *Elijah* prayed, and by his prayer he shut the Heavens that it rained not for three years and a half.

Well, but what are the Heavens here?

Those cannot be understood literally, but spiritually: As it is said in the 8th verse, *Their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great City, which Spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt*: The Heavens here cannot be understood literally, but spiritually; what then? what are the Heavens then, and what is the shutting of the Heavens that it rain not.

The Heavens are the highest power, so that look when the Witnesses have power to restrain the highest power in Church and State from their wonted influence; then is this word fulfilled, that they have power to shut Heaven that it rain not in the days of their Prophecie: I say the Heavens are the highest powers: look when the Witnesses do restrain the highest power in Church and State from their wonted influence, Then is this word fulfilled.

Secondly, They have power also to turn water into

into blood. What's that? plainly it must relate to *Moses*, who turned Rivers, and turned waters into blood: What's that? It cannot be understood literally, but spiritually still: What's that then? Why thus: These waters are to be understood spiritually, and so you read in *Revel. 16*. The Sea, and Rivers were turned into blood: Look therefore when the Witnesses shall have power to turn the still waters of a State or Nation into War and Blood; Then is this Word fulfilled.

But how came the Witnesses to have power to do this?

It may be, not legally, for it is not said here, *And I will give power* unto them to shut the Heavens: but these *have power* to shut the Heavens, and these *have power* to turn waters into blood; 'tis not said here, *I will give* them power, as 'tis said before: it may be this may be done, and not legally.

But when shall this be done?

It must be done immediately before their slaying. I pray mark the coherence here: They shall have power to shut the Heavens immediately before they are slain, and to turn water into blood immediately before they are slain, just before the three years and a half, that they lye dead upon the earth: For when did *Elijah* shut the Heavens but immediately before the three years and a half of drought: When did *Moses* turn the waters into blood, but immediately before the coming out of the Children of *Israel* out of *Egypt*: So here, immediately before the Witnesses are slain, and they lye three years and a half as dead, immediately before, they have power to shut the Heavens that it rain not, and to turn waters into blood.

Now

Now therefore to draw to a Conclusion; whenever you see all these things come to pass. I will not apply them to times or places, this or that time or place: But when you shall see all these things come to pass, one treading upon the heel of another: when you shall see that the Witnesses have power to shut the Heavens that it rain not: to restrain the highest powers both in Church and State from their wonted influence. And that they have power to turn water into blood, and still Nations into War; and then immediately upon it they shall be slain, and so lye dead, deprived of their functions and vital operations, as if they lay dead. Then lift up your heads, and comfortably say, hopefully say, Now, now comes the three years and half, which is the last time: Now is our Salvation near, for God will bring near his righteousness, and his Salvation shall not tarry. And he will place Salvation in *Sion*, for *Israel* his glory.

Only for the present, let me conclude and leave an Exhortation with you, which I will draw up from all which hath bin said.

The first part on't is this: The Saints and people of God in Anti-Christian times, they are Witnesses.

First therefore, be sure that you bear your testimony faithfully. Be faithful now in your Witness-bearing, Christians. Christ will pay all the charge that you are at in Witness-bearing. If a man have a Suit at Law, and have five or six Witnesses, and carry them a hundred Miles, he bears all the charge of their Witness-bearing. Saith Christ, I will give power to *My* Witnesses, they are *My* Witnesses. Ye are Christs Witnesses, and look whatsoever charge you are at, he will bear the charge, he will bear all the charge of your Witness-bearing: And if your Faith come not home enough, as it should be, yet

Christ

Christ is Faithful though we believe not, and therefore be faithful in your Witness-bearing.

Secondly, Though you be but few, be not afraid, be not discouraged, for Christ will alwaies have enough to bear Witness to his truth in the darkeſt times. - Comfort ye one another with thoſe words.

Thirdly, Be fruitful as the Olive tree; And be lightſome as the Candleſtick. O that God would roul away the reproach of a barren heart from every one of you, and of a barren life. Tis time now to be fruitful that you may be as the Olive-Tree, and as the Candleſtick, to hold forth your light to others.

Fourthly, Pray now have a care that you wear your Sackcloth handſomly. Truly theſe Meetings that now we do enjoy, they have a Sack-cloth on them: there is a Sack-cloth upon the loyns of every ſuch meeting as this. Chriſtians, you have your Sack-cloth on, pray wear your Sack-cloth handſomly, for in due time you ſhall have Robes, you ſhall come forth in white Robes, having your Palmes in your hands, only for the preſent wear your Sack-cloth handſomly. I mean, carry your ſad and mournful condition as you ought.

Fifthly, If you find that you be not able for to bear your testimony as you would, and as you ſhould: Go then to Chriſt, and remember this promiſe. *I will give power unto my two Witnesses.* O plead this promiſe Chriſtians, it is a great promiſe. *I will give power unto my two Witnesses.* Though men take away power from you for Prophecy; They will not let you Pray, nor Propheſe, yet *I will give power.* I will give power in oppoſition to your own weakneſs. And I will give power in oppoſition to mens Malice. Therefore go to Chriſt and preſs this promiſe, Lord, I any one of thy poor Witnesses, therefore give pow-

er according to thy Word; for thou hast said: I will give power, and they shall Prophesie.

Sixthly, Let not your mouth be shut, but open in Prayer: For it is said here, If any man will hurt them, Fire proceedeth out of his mouth. That was the Prayer of *Elijah*, It brought down fire, scorching and blasting Judgments. Christians, is there a Fire, a Fire in your mouth? O you that have any credit in Heaven, pray now. If there were any here that I could speak to, I would say thus, You that never prayed, pray now; but I hope there is none such; but if there should be any such, I would say, you that never prayed, pray now; and you that have any credit in Heaven, improve it in this day of trial for the poor Witnesses.

And to conclude all: If that you should see that the Witnesses shall have done such great things, that they have shut Heaven that it rain not; that they have turned water into blood, and yet immediately upon it they have bin slain, and lye dead: If you see all these things come to passe one after another, then lift up your heads O ye Saints, and wait, and wait; for he that doth come, will come, and will not tarry. And when he comes, he will not only pay you your principle money, but he will pay you all your forbearance money too. And therefore what I say to one, I say unto you all, and to my own soule, Let us wait upon the Lord and keep his way. And thus now I have done with the first time of the Witnesses, their Prophesying time, their slaying time follows: But that you will conjecture at something by what hath bin said.

S E R M. V.

The uncertainty of the world,
should take off our Hearts
from the Love of it.

I Cor. 7. 30, 31. But this I say Brethren, the
time is short. It remaineth, that both they
that have Wives, be as though they had none:
And they that weep as though they wept not:
And they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced
not: And they that buy, as though they posses-
sed not: And they that use this world, as though
abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth
away.

But this I say Brethren, the time is short, &c.]
In this Scripture we have a great Exhor-
tation to use this World, as if we used it
not, which the Apostle openeth by divers
instances; and strengtheneth by divers Ar-
guments. The general Exhortation brings up the
Rear, They that use this world as if they used it not, or as
not abusing it. The instances march in the body and
middle of the words; They that have Wives, as though
they

they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not. Which are inclosed with two Reasons:

One in the Front, *The time is short; This I say Brethren, the time is short, It remaineth, &c.*

The other reason in the close or rear of the words, *For the fashion of this World passeth away.* From all which then I take up this Doctrine or Observation,

Doctr. That the consideration of the shortness of our time here, and that the fashion of this World passeth away, should move us to use the World in all our particular concernments, as if we used it not. For the opening whereof, these several things will fall under our consideration:

First, That a good man may make use of the world.

Secondly, Though he may make use of the World, yet he must use the World as if he used it not.

Thirdly, What are those particular concernments wherein we are to use the World as if we used it not. Fourthly what there is in these Reasons of the *Shortness of the time*, and the *passing fashion of the world*, that should move us so to use the World, as if we used it not.

Fifthly, When a man may be said so to use the World as if he used it not.

Sixthly, What is the issue and the consequence thereof, in case he do or do not.

Seventhly, What a man should do that he may get his heart into this holy frame, So to use the World as if he used it not.

First therefore, We must grant that a good man may make use of the World; he may make use of the

should take off our hearts from the love of it. 129

the world in reference to the persons of the world, in reference to the things of the world.

In regard of the persons of the world : So *Abraham* and *Isaac* did make use of *Abimelech* ; so *Jacob* did make use of *Laban* ; so the *Israelites* did make use of the *Egyptians* ; so the *Jews* did make use of the *Heathen Cyrus, Darius, Artaxerxes* , for the building of the House of God. Plainly then, a good man may make use of the world, the persons of the world.

And as he may make use of the persons of the world ; so he may make use of the things of the world, for they are his own : *All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, things present, and things to come, life and death, all things are yours.* And who may not make use of his own ? If a friend should send a man a gift, it would be accounted an incivility and unthankfulness not to make use thereof. Why truly, as for the things of this world, they are Gods gift ; *The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh* : They are Gods gift. And will it not be accounted an incivility towards God, and an unthankfulness towards God, not to make use of this his gift that he hath given us. May not a Traveller make use of those things in his journey, that are meet and necessary for him in his journey ? he may. We are all Travellers to another Country, we are upon our journey, so far therefore as things are necessary for our journey, we may make use thereof : The Lord would have *Adam* himself to be employed in the state of Innocency, in the things of the world, *Six daies shalt thou labour, and do all that thou hast to do* : And the Apostle in his second Epistle to the *Thessalonians*, Chap. 3. v. 11. shews, that those are *busy-bodies*, whose bodies are not busie : *We bear that*

there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busie bodies; working not at all, but work in anothers ground: busie bodies, because their bodies are not busie: See how they go here together, working not at all, but are at work where they should not work: those whose bodies are not busie, will be busie bodies: And is it not an evil thing to be a busie body? tis so; therefore we must work: How can we work if we do not make use of the world, and the things thereof? So that plainly then we see the first thing clear'd: A good man may make use of the world, both in referencie to the persons of the world, and in reference to the things of the world: A good man may make use of the world.

2. *But secondly, though we may make use of the world, we must use the world as though we used it not, not regarding it too much, not setting out affections upon it too much, not spending too much time upon the world, and the things thereof.*

For look as wicked men do use the things of God, and of the other world, so a good man should use the things of this world: Why now a wicked man doth use the things of God, as if he us'd them not; pray, as if he prayed not, and hear, as if he heard not; why, because his mind is upon other things: Why truly so the minds of the Saints are, or should be, upon other things. Set your affections on things that are above: 'Tis a good speech that an Antient hath, saith he, As good men are, where they yet are not, namely in heaven; so they are not where they now are, namely on earth, for your conversation is in heaven: Though your communication be here on earth, yet your conversation is in heaven; and if heaven be our object, earth will be our abject: Few I confess that live at this rate, to use the world as if they

should take off our hearts from the love of it. 131

they us'd it not? But is there not reason, good reason for it? let's see the reasons: Is there not good reason for it? yes. For

First, If the world, and the things thereof be so our own, as if they were not our own; then why should we not use the world, and the things thereof, as if we us'd them not? why now, though the things of the world are our own in regard of propriety, yet if you look into the sixteenth of Luke, you will find that they are called *not our own*, ver. 11. *If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous Mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?* and if ye have not been faithful in that which is another mans, who will give you that which is your own? That which is another mans, that's the same with the *unrighteous Mammon*; who shall give unto you that which is your own? *spiritual things are our own*; the things of God are here call'd *our own*; properly that is our own which we can carry up and down with us, *omnia vesp. mecum porto*; that is our own which we can carry away with us, out of the world with us, that's truly our own: But now, as for the things of this world, they have wings, yea Solomon saith, *they make themselves wings*: If you clip their wings they will grow again; they make themselves wings, and fly away; and they have the wings of an Eagle, strong wings for to fly away. Now if that the things of this world be so our own, as if they were not our own, why should we not use the world, as if we us'd it not?

Secondly, If the things of this world be, and are as if they were not, why should we not use them as if we us'd them not? In the 23. of the Proverbs, Solomon saith, that they are not, *why shouldst thou let thine eyes fly upon that which is not*. They are not, and

122 . . . *The uncertainty of the world,* . . . if, that they be as if they were not, why should we not use them as if we us'd them not? . . .

Thirdly, If it be not in the power of any creature in this world, for to help us, or to hurt us, to do either good or evil to us, why then should we not use the world as if we us'd it not? you know, *Psalm 62. 10. If riches increase, set not your hearts upon them, why? God hath spoken once, twice, and I heard it, that power belongs to God.* 'Tis not in the power of riches, or any creature in the world, to do us either hurt or help. In *Isa. 43* it is made Gods Prerogative, *Shew that things that are to come hereafter.* *W. 23. That we may know that ye are Gods, do good, or do evil, do good, or do evil: if ye will shew yourselves O ye Idols to be Gods, then do good, or do evil; this is Gods great Prerogative, to help, or to hurt, its Gods prerogative, it is not in the power of any creature for to help, or hurt; now if it be not in the power of any creature for to help, or hurt, why should we not use the world, and the things thereof, as if we us'd them not? . . .*

Fourthly, We are so to use the world, and the things thereof, as they are; why now truly there is nothing in this world that is either good or evil morally, but as it is used; prosperity in it self is not good, nor morally good; adversity in it self is not evil, it is not morally evil; all the things of this world are but indifferent, neither good nor evil in themselves, but as they are used. Thus then, if all the things of this world are but in their own nature indifferent, neither good nor evil, why should not our hearts be carri'd out indifferently towards them, and so to use them, as if we us'd them not? . . . All the things of this world, they are but to serve a turn, or they are not to be enjoy'd for themselves, only

should take off our hearts from above of it. 233

only for to serve a turn; there is nothing that you have to deal withall, but is meely for to serve a turn. Cloaths are but to serve a turn, to cover nakedness; good meate and drink is but to serve a turn; to serve our hunger, and our thirst; money, said houses, and lands, are all but to serve a turn; as, God is to be enjoyed; God is not for to serve a turn, but all the things of this world, they are only for to serve a particular turn. The Schoolmen therefore have a handsome speech of a worldly man, they describe him, *He doeth enjoy what he should use, and he doth use what he should enjoy.* God is to be enjoyed, and he uses him; the world is to be used, and he enjoys that: but 'tis God alone that is to be enjoyed for himself; all things here are but to serve a turn, and therefore why should we not use the world as if we us'd it not.

Fifthly, If the world do use us, as if it us'd us not, and if the world do care for us, as if it car'd not for us, why should not we use the world as if we us'd it not? Paul reasons after this manner, in Gal. 6. 14. *God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom (or whereby) the world is crucified unto me; and I unto the world.* The world looks upon me as a man hang'd, crucified, hanged out of the way, why truly I look upon the world so too, saith he; the world looks upon me as a dry leaf, and I look upon the world as a dry leaf. Thus now it is, the world cares for us, as if it car'd not for us, and the world uses us, as if it us'd us not; and therefore why should not we use the world as if we us'd it not.

Obj. *But Solomon saith, Whatsoever thou findest in thine hand to do, do it with all thy might.*

Ans. True, and it is in our hand to use the world,

as if we us'd it not; and therefore this we are to do with all our might, even to use the world as if we us'd it not: And so I have done with the second thing; though a good man may make use of the world, and the things thereof, yet he is to use the world, as if he us'd it not.

He 3^d. I put then thirdly; what are those particular concerns wherein we are to use the world as if we us'd it not? why, the Apostle here doth instance in four.

In the matter of our Relations; it remaineth that they that have wives, be as though they had none.

In the matter of our grief; And they that weep, as though they wept not.

In the matter of our joy; And they that rejoyce, as though they rejoyced not.

And in the matter of our possessions; And they that buy, as though they possessed not. I shall run through them briefly, that we may have the clear understanding of the case, and the matter before us.

First, As for the matter of our Relations, saith the Apostle, *It remaineth, that both they that have* ~~Wives~~ *be as though they had none*: A man may use his Relations, as if he had none; His Relations:

Why, but is not a man to provide for his wife, and children, and family?

Yes, he is worse than an Infidel that provideth not for his Wife, and for his Family, for his Relations. But when a man hath Relations, he is very apt to be lost therein; a man may be drunk with his own Bear or Wine: *I have married a Wife, and I cannot come*; therefore he is to use his Relations as if he had none, in regard of his care to please God; as diligent in frequenting the means of grace, as if he had no Relations. For, saith he, 32.

should take off our hearts from the love of it. 135

But I wou'd have you without carefulness, he that is unmarried, careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: He that is married, careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife. In reference therefore unto the pleasing of God, frequenting of the means of grace, let him that hath Relations be as if he had none, hindered no more by them, than if he had none.

Let him be as zealous for the truth, as if he had none.

Let him be as apt, and ready to suffer for the Cause of Christ, as if he had none: We are apt to boggle at sufferings, because of our Relations; What shall become of my wife and children? What shall become of my Family? It was a Speech therefore of Origen, when he was young, unto his Father, when his Father was to go and suffer Martyrdom for the Cause of Christ; O my Father, saith he, O my Father, Take heed that you do not bank this suffering for my sake, that you may provide for me. We are very apt to bank sufferings for the Cause of Christ, upon the account of our Family, and upon the account of our Relations; but now, let him that hath Relations be as if he had none, frequenting and using of the means of grace, praying, reading, hearing, as if he had none; as zealous for the truth, as if he had none; as apt and ready to suffer for the Cause of Christ, as if he had none. Thus we are to use the world as if we us'd it not, in reference to this concernment: (I must but touch upon things.)

Secondly, As for the matter of grief, saith the Apostle, And they that weep, as though they wept not. 'Tis lawful to grieve and weep, not only for our sins, but for the misery of the times: O that my brethren

were waters, and that mine eyes were a fountain of tears, that I could weep day and night for the slaughters. Mine eyes run down with rivers of tears, saith David, because they keep not thy Law. God hath a bottle to keep all these Pearls in; the tears of his people, they are precious; and too precious to be lost: As God hath a bag for all the sins of the wicked to keep them in, so he hath a bottle for all the tears of the Saints; but yet we must not weep too much, but grieve as if we grieved not.

Or otherwise it will argue that we have too much love to the world: Love is the cause of grief; the more passionately you grieve for any outward thing, the more abundantly you shew your love thereunto, and it will in some measure reflect upon your God: 'Tis a considerable speech that of a child, when the mother of the child had us'd to say upon al her losses, *For my God lives*; when she had lost a child, she would say, yet my God's alive; when she had lost a friend, yet my God's alive: At last, loosing a child she loved much, she wept very much, and another of her children came unto her and said, *Mother, is your God dead?* Mother, is not your God alive? She used to say still, yet my God's alive; and now weeping much, and not saying so, the child said, *Mother, is not your God alive?* Truly this grieving much, it hath such a reflexion as this, *Is not your God alive?* Christians, is not your God alive? you know what the Apostle saith, *Rejoyce in the Lord evermore, and again I say rejoyce.*

If that we are to rejoyce in the Lord evermore, then surely we are to weep as if we wept not, and to grieve as if we grieved not: And thus we are to use the world as if we us'd it not, in reference to this concernment, the matter of our grief.

Thirdly,

should take off our hearts from the love of it. 337

Thirdly, As for the matter of our joy, the Apostle saith, *And let them that rejoyce, be as though they rejoyced not*; 'tis lawful to rejoyce, even in the things of the world, *Rejoyce in the wise of thy youth*. God hath provided several delightful objects for every sense; there's Musick for hearing, and there are smells, and sweet smells for smelling, sweet things for the taste; God hath so ordered things, that every Sense hath its delightful object; surely therefore it is lawful to take pleasure, and to rejoyce in the things of this world.

But still, though we do rejoyce in the things of this world, we must rejoyce as if we rejoyced not.

For why should I joy much in that which I cannot enjoy? why now the things of this world I may use, but I cannot enjoy them. God only is to be enjoyed.

Who will rejoyce with all his might in the blaze of a Wisp? a Wisp of Straw set on fire makes a great blaze, but it ends in black ashes: who rejoyces much in the blaze of the Wisp? why truly the best outward thing, it is but the blaze of a Wisp, and if we dont take heed, it ends in black ashes.

Who would rejoyce much in that which is but a *Tanquam*, a quasi of good, which he cannot satisfie his soul in? there is a crack in the finest Christal Glass in this world, a crevice: what outward thing is there in all the world, but hath some crevice in it? what beauty, but hath some Wart grows upon the face on't? Our Saviour Christ was at a Wedding, and when he was there the Wine was spent; why? for to shew that in the midst of all our fulness and joy, there is a deficiency, and there is a want, bottles will be empty.

And

And if it be the great work of a Christian for to moderate his affections, then shold we not grieve as if we grieved not, and rejoyce as if we rejoyced not.

The great work of a Christian, what is it? why, the great work of a Christian is not for to know much; the great work of a Christian is not to have much; he is a Christian indeed that grieves as if he grieved not, and rejoyces as if he rejoyced not, that moderates his affections, that hath the command and the true moderation of his affections, I, he is a Christian indeed. So that thus then we see, that we are to use the world as if we us'd it not, in reference to this concernment, the *matter* of our joy.

Fourthly, As for the matter of our possessions, the Apostle saith. *And let them that buy, be as though they possessed not*: 'tis lawful, and very lawful to buy and sell, and to possess.

For else there would be no propriety, but there is a propriety in nature, the last Commandment, *Thou shalt not covet thy Neighbours Oxe, nor his Ass, nor any thing that is his*; nor any thing that is his: The Moral Law, the Law of Nature tells us, that there is an his, that is, a propriety; and the Gospel tells us, and the Law of the Gospel tells us, that there must be liberality, surely then its lawful to buy, and sell, and to possess: 'tis lawful.

But though we may buy, and sell, and possess, yet we must possess as if we possessed not, buy as if we bought not, and possess as if we possessed not: For else,

How can we be strangers here: 'tis said of *Abraham*, by Faith, *he was a stranger in the Land of Promise*: A stranger in the Land of Promise, certainly if a man would let out his heart upon any Land, a

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good man would let out his heart to the utmost upon the Land of Promise. What, the Land of Promise, and yet a stranger to it: Yes, though it were the Land of Promise, yet a stranger to it.

How can a man be patient in the loss of things; If he be not weaned from them while he hath them. Surely *Job* was weaned from what he had, by being so patient under his loss.

And if that good men have other greater things and possessions for to mind, and they cannot intensively mind both: why then a man must surely so possess, as if he possessed not. Why now a good man hath higher and greater possessions to mind, an inheritance Incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in the Heavens: And both he cannot mind together, but he must love the one and hate the other. The intention about the one, must be enmity about the other. Then surely it is our duty to use the World as if we used it not, in reference unto this concernment; namely, this concernment of our possessions. And so you see the thing now cleared by these four instances: We are to use the World as if we used it not; In the matter of our Relations; In the matter of our griefs; In the matter of our Joyes; And in the matter of our possessions.

Well, but then fourthly. In the fourth place: What is there in these Reasons of the Apostle, The shortness of the time, And the Fashion of the world passing away. What is there in these Reasons that may inforce this Exhortation, To use the World as if we used it not.

Much every way (still I must but touch at things). The time is short. Use the World as if we used it not: For the time is short.

The time of our life is short, tis but short. A great

great business we have to do in reference to our eternity, and our time to do it in is but short. Time runneth, and trust up as it were into a little bundle; and therefore why should we not use the World as if we used it not? If a Countrey man comes to London upon some business that doth concern him nearly in his life, why will he run up and down the City for to see things? Go and see the Lyons, and the Bears, and not mind and dispatch his business. Or if a Citizen go into the Country about some business that concerns his life, will he run up and down the Closets for to catch Butter-flies, and to gather Cowslips, when all his time is but little enough for to do his business in? Surely no, we are upon our life, and we are upon our Eternity, and upon this little spot and moment of time hangs our Eternity: what shall we run up and down catching Butterflies, gathering Cowslips, running up and down to see the Lyons, and the Bears, and our business undone, and our time but little? All the time that we have is little enough to make our Calling and Election sure.

All the time we have is little enough for the preparing for our great change. The Devil doth improve his time upon this score. We read in the Revelations, that the Devil is come down with great wrath, for his time is short. Shall the Devil improve his time because it is but short, in a way of mischief: And shall not we improve our time seeing it is but short? Our time is short, therefore let us use the World as though we used it not.

But then secondly, as for the second Reason, Use the World as if we used it not, we must, *For the fashion of this world passeth away.* The fashion of this World, 'tis but a Scheme, it is but a piece of Pageantry, it is but a Stage, one goes off and another comes

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comes on. Take the World in the bravest dress,
and it is but a Fashion: And as thats a Fashion to
day which was not yesterday, thats a Fashion to day
which is none to morrow: Fashions pass away: So
the Fashion of the World passeth away. Joseph
was in favour greatly with his Father, and that favour
past away. His Brethren sold him; then he was in
an afflicted condition, being sold down to Egypt. That
fashion past away, he came into Potiphar's house, and
there he had favour. Well, there he had favour a
little time, and that fashion past away; then thrown
into the Prison, and there he was in a sad condition
again: and that Fashion past away, he had favor with
the Jaylor: And then he came to the Throne, to be
the great Councillor of the Nation; and that lasted
not long, but that past away. What piece of the world
is there, but the fashion thereof passeth away.

Will you instance in the strongest natural piece
of the World, or the civil moral piece of the World,
or the sinful fashion of the World, or the Religious
fashion of the World, or the comfortable fashion of
the World?

First, for the natural piece, the Fashion of the
World: what stronger piece of the World than the
Heavens and Earth. Now Read what is said in the
first of the Hebrews v. 10, 11. *Thou Lord in the begin-
ning hast laid the Foundation of the Earth, and the Hea-
vens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish, but
thou remainest, and they all shall wax old as doth a Gar-
ment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall
be changed; but thou art the same, as the Heb. In the
Psalmes, But thou art he. But thou art the same, and
thy years shall not fail; but as for them, though
these things be brought over a little, as a vesture shalt
thou fold them up, and they shall be changed. The*

142 *The uncertainty of the world,*
nap of all these things, the fashion of all these things, it will pass away.

Or will you instance in the civil moral part of the world, that fashion thereof? What more desirable thing is there in all the world than friendship; a true friend to an ingenuous heart, there is nothing in this world more desirable than friendship? Will you see how that passeth away? In *Pla. 88. v. 8.* *Thou hast put mine acquaintance far from me, thou hast made me an abomination unto them.* It passeth away indeed; an abomination to friends; thou hast put mine acquaintance far from me, thou hast made me an abomination to them. See how it sticks upon his heart: he comes over again in *v. 18.* *Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness.* See how the fashion of this piece of the world passes away.

Will you instance in the sinful fashions of the world? why, it may be, the poor people of God they are in a mourning habit, in a mournful fashion, and the enemies of the people of God, they are in a very brave and a gallant fashion: you shall see how this fashion passes away, in *Isa. 51. 7.* *Hearken unto me ye that know righteousness: the people whose heart is my Law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings, for the Moab shall eat them like a garment: They are brave fellows, and they are in a very brave and a gallant fashion, but the moab shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool, but my righteousness shall be for ever. and my salvation from generation to generation.* As for the redeemed of the Lord, at *v. 11.* *But the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: They shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and mourning*

mourning shall flee away. That fashion, that their mourning habit shall off, and that fashion shall pass away.

Or will you instance in the Religion piece and part of the world, and the fashion thereof? You know what is said in Heb. 12. v. 26. *Once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven*; speaking of the Jewish Worship, the Religious part, and the words yet once more, signifies the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things that cannot be shaken may remain. Indeed, saith he, we have received a Kingdom, wherefore we receive a Kingdom which cannot be moved. Indeed the Kingdom of the Gospel it cannot be moved, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against the Church of God in the general, but the fashion of particular Churches may pass away, and be broken. What a famous Church was Coloss, in the daies of the Apostle; but O thou Coloss, where art thou now? What a famous Church was the Church of the Thessalonians? where is the Church of the Thessalonians now? this Tabernacle is pull'd down, particular Churches, though the Kingdom of Christ shall go on, and shall prevail, particular Churches may be scattered, and the fashion thereof may pass away.

Or will you instance in that which you call the comfortable part of the world? What's that of all things you take the most comfort in? your Relations, the Husband in the Wife, and Parent in the Child; the fashion of these passeth away; Children pass away, Husbands pass away, and Wives pass away, Friends pass away, Relations pass away; Thus the fashion of the world passeth away; and therefore why should we not use the world as if we us'd it not? Pray now, when a Traveller comes to his Inn,

Inn; why doth he set his heart upon his bed, or his
 flooke, or any thing that he hath in his Chambers
 No, for, saith he, I pass away, and these things they
 pass from me: If you have a fine silver stream of
 water run by your doore, you dont set your heart
 upon it; for, say you, its fine silver stream that
 glides by my doore, it passeth away; why should I
 set my heart upon it? Thus it is with all the things
 here below; the things of this world they pass a-
 way, the strongest natural piece of the world, and
 the civil piece of the world, and the sinful piece of
 the world, and the Religious piece of the world,
 and the comfortable piece of the world, all pass a-
 way; why then should we not use the world as if
 we us'd it not? And thus you may see what there is
 in these reasons of the Apostle to enforce this same,
 and that's the fourth thing.

Firstly, But when may a man be said then, to use
 the world as if he us'd it not? And
 Why look, when a man doth so use the world,
 and the things thereof, as he doth walk with God in
 the use thereof, then he uses the world as if he us'd
 it not; when one man walks with another, he turns
 as he turns: So when a man walks with God in the
 world, he turns as God turns: When God calls to
 joy, he joys; when God calls to grief, he grieves;
 he walks with God, for he turns as God turns: I
 say, look when a man doth so use the world, as he
 doth walk with God in the use of the world, turn-
 ing as God turns, then he doth use the world as if he
 us'd it not.

Secondly, Look when a man doth use the world,
 and the things thereof, in subordination to the
 things of God, then he doth use the world as if he
 us'd it not, in subordination to the things of God.

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And thirdly, Look when a man doth make it his business for to serve the Lord, and doth the things of the world by his by, then he doth use the world as if he us'd it not: As if a man doth make it his business to get the world, and prays by the by, and reads the Scriptures by the by, and doth good by the by: Now when a man doth make it his business to get the World, and uses the things of God by the by, then he doth use the things of God as if he us'd them not. So on the other side.

Fourthly, Look when a man is dead, and estranged from all the world, and the things thereof, through the communion and fellowship that he hath with Christ, then he doth use the World as if he us'd it not; for we die to the World, by living in God; I say, we die to the world, by living in God: Why now consider it, it is one thing for a man to be dead unto the world, and another thing to abstain from this or that particular comfort of the World, this or that particular way of the World: Possibly I may abstain from this or that particular way, or course of the World, because my inclination dont like ont; some mens inclinations dont like of drunkenness, some mens inclinations dont like this way, or that way; possibly a man may abstain from this or that particular thing of the world, and yet not be dead to the whole world; possibly a man may be very negligent of the world, and slubber over the things of the World, and yet not be dead to the World: A prodigal man is not dead to the World; its one thing for a man to be negligent of the World, and slubber over the things of the World, and another thing to be dead to the world, saith Calvin; this Philosophy is in every mans mouth, He is dead to the World, but few there are

that are dead to the World, and estranged from the World, through their communion and fellowship with God : But I say, look when a man is dead, and estranged from the world, through communion and fellowship with God, then he uses the World as if he us'd it not.

Fifthly, Look when a man can leave and forsake his worldly interest, his own interest in the world, that he may please others, and be at peace with others, truly it argues, that a man doth use the World as if he us'd it not : Thus it was with *Abraham*, *Abraham* gave *Lot* the choice ; *Abraham* was the Elder, and the choice did belong to *Abraham*, but he gave *Lot* the choice, and he parted with his own interest for peace and quietness : Why *Abraham* lived by Faith, and he us'd the World as if he us'd it not : Thus should we do, for saith the Apostle in Rom. 15. *We then that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please our selves : Let everyone of us please his Neighbour for his good to edification, for even Christ pleased not himself.* See how the Apostle presses it ; what more ordinary than this ? every man seeks for to please himself, especially in the matters of the World : every man seeks for to please himself, Christ pleased not himself ; would you therefore know when a man doth so use the World as if he us'd it not, if that you do so use the World, as you do walk with God in the midst of it : The things of the World in subordination to the things of God, make it your business to serve the Lord, and other things by the by ; estranged from the World, through communion and fellowship with God : You can part with your own interest for to please others, that are weak ones ; this doth argue then, that you do use the World as if you us'd it not.

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Sixthly, Why, but suppose I do or do not, what's the consequence? Suppose I do not use the World as if I us'd it not, What then?

I will tell you what then.

Then you do want this Character of a good man.

Then you are not dead to the World, and if not dead to the World, then not dead with Christ; and if not communion with Christ in his Death, not communion with him in his Resurrection.

Then you are defiled by the World, and the things thereof; use the world as if you us'd it not, and you are not defiled thereby; but if otherwise, you are defiled, by all the things that you meddle with, you are but defiled.

And then your hearts will reproach you when you come to die; O when you come to die, and you lie upon your Death-bed; I had the World, and the things of the World, but I did not use the World as if I us'd it not: As the Mother said, Where's the Child in the Cradle, when the house was on fire, and they had been getting out the goods, and pulling things out of the Fire: But at last, Where's the Child in the Cradle? So at last, when we come to die, O where's my Soul all this while? Your heart will reproach you when you come to die; and blessed is that man or woman whose heart shall not reproach him when he comes to die.

Yea, let me say this farther, you cannot more prejudice the thing you love, nor wrong your selves more, than by loving it too much, and not using of it as if you us'd it not: A man leans upon a stick, and if it be too weak it breaks, he breaks the stick, and it runs into his hand; the stick suffers, and his hand suffers: So when we come to lean upon a thing, and dont use it as if we us'd it not, it

breaks, and it runs into our hands: Look into the 23 of *Ezek.* and you shall see there how the *Jews* lovers, and what they rested on, run into their hands, v. 5. *And Aholah played the Harlot when she was mine, and she doted on her Lovers, on the Assyrians her Neighbours, v. 7. Thus she committed her whoredoms with them, with all them that were the chosen men of Assyria, and with all on whom she doted, with all their Idols she defiled her self: What becomes of her? Read v. 9. Wherefore I have delivered her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the Assyrians upon whom she doted: Wherefore? Why she doted upon the Assyrians her lovers, and I have given her into the hand of the Assyrians her lovers, upon whom she doted: Why, when a people shall dote upon this and that, God will give them into the hand of their lovers, and make them to run into their hands: 'tis a most prejudicial thing to dote upon any thing in this World.*

And indeed, (to say no more in it but this) how will you be able to suffer? Suffering times are *come* Christians; not *coming*, but *come*: How will you be able to suffer in these suffering times, if you dont use the World as if you us'd it not? What makes the difficulty in suffering, but because we cannot part with this or that Relation, or this or that comfort? Oh this makes the difficulty in our sufferings; do but use the World now as if you us'd it not, you will be the more able to suffer; but if you dont use the world as if you us'd it not, how will you be able to suffer in this suffering day? Wherefore as you do desire that you may be able to suffer in this suffering day: As you do desire that you may not be whipt by your own lovers: that you may not be given into the hand of your own lovers: that

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that that which you rest upon should not run into your hand: As you do desire that your own hearts may not reproach you when you come to dye: As you do desire that you may not be defiled by the things of the world: As you do desire that you may have communion with Christ in his death, and in his Resurrection: And as you do desire that you may have this mark and character of a good man, labour so to use this world as if you used it not.

But Seventhly you will say, What shall we do that we may get our hearts into this gracious and holy frame, which indeed will fit us for every condition, under grace? what shall we do that we may use the world as if we us'd it not.

First, I shall a little farther speak to this, and shew you what that man doth that doth use the world as if he used it not. And secondly, give you some means.

First of all for that, what that man doth, that doth use the world as if he used it not.

1. He will be sure to use Grace in the use of the world, and in all his dealings in the world, and the things thereof. He is never satisfied unless he doth see that he doth use Grace in the use of the world, and the things thereof.

2. He is alwayes ready to give up that part of the world unto God wherein his affections are most engaged, His *Isaac*; for saith he, God doth use to try his people in the things wherein they do most delight: And therefore still he is upon that, ready to give up that unto God wherein his affections are the most engaged.

3. He will be sure to stand at a distance from the World and the things thereof, in the getting, as well as in the keeping; and in the keeping as well as in

the getting. There are some that are very worldly in the getting part, and are very free and prodigal as to the keeping. Some are not so worldly in the getting, but they are worldly in the keeping. A man that doth use the world as if he used it not, he doth stand at a distance from the things of the world in the getting as well as in the keeping, and in the keeping as well as in the getting.

4. He doth not place his Religion in a morning and in an evening duty, but in his walking with God in his place. Every man hath so much grace as he uses in his place. Consider what I say, He doth not place his Religion (he that uses the world as if he used it not) in a morning and in an evening Prayer, but in his walking with God. *Adams* tryal did not lye in the Morning and in the Evening Prayer; but *Adams* tryal lay among the Trees. So the tryal of a man don't lye in the morning and in the evening duty, but in the Trees, and in his Calling, and in his place. And he doth not place his Religion meerly in a morning Prayer, or in an evening Prayer, and all the day after muddling up and down in the earth. No, he that uses the world as if he used it not, he doth not place his Religion in an Evening, or in a Morning duty, but in walking with God in the use of the world.

5. A man that uses the world as if he used it not, he is sometimes more afraid of prosperity than of adversity. All men are afraid of adversity, but a man that uses the world as if he used it not, he is sometimes more afraid of prosperity: I am sure of this, he will fear God in prosperity, and love God in Adversity. Now therefore, would you use the world as if you used it not, remember these five things.

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But secondly by way of Means. If you would use the world and the things thereof, as if you used it not; then labour to possess your hearts much with Gods Allsufficiency. In *Psalm 62. If riches increase, set not your hearts upon them, once and twice have I heard it, that power belongs unto God.* And mercy also unto the Lord: Gods All-sufficient, there's enough in God alone, Come O my Soul, possess your heart with this, Ah, there's enough in God alone. Still be pressing this upon your own soul, There's enough in God alone, Gods All-sufficient.

Secondly, Look upon the things of the World, with the prospective of the Scripture; not with one of the worlds glasses: Not with the worlds Multiplying-glass. The world, and the glass of the world; If you look upon the world with the glass of the world, there you shall find that the things of the world are called Gods, and they are called Substance, An Estate and Substance. But look upon the world with the Prospective of the Scriptures, there they are called Shadows, there they are called Vanities, there they are called Things that are not. Whats the reason that people are so much in love with the things of the world, but because they look upon them with the multiplying glass of the world, and not with the glass, and prospective of the Scripture?

Thirdly, Never fall in love with any condition for it self, but for the good of the condition. Love not your condition for the condition it self, but for the God of your condition. I do but name things.

Fourthly, Take all Gods Allarms of death, and mingle those with the consideration of the death of Christ, Christ crucified. There is never a death that doth pass before us, but its Gods Alarm, and it

calls off from the world and the things thereof. Truly this I must say, It is not all the deaths in the world will make us dye to the world, only the death of Christ: take Christ Crucified, and then you will dye to the world. And therefore I say, take Gods Alarums of death, but be sure that you mingle those Alarums with the consideration of the death of Jesus Christ.

And then fifthly, Afford the world, and the things thereof, so much of your love, as better things do leave: For Christians, that which is too cold for God, is hot enough for the world; I say it again, *That which is too cold for God, is hot enough for the world*; and therefore afford the things of the world so much of your love, as better things do leave; for that which is too cold for God, is hot enough for the world, and the things thereof.

Sixthly, Let the name of the Lord be very precious in your hearts, and in your eyes; and then you will use the things of the world as if you us'd them not. *Abraham* had a very great regard unto the Name of God; and he would not have it said, that the King of *Sodom* made him rich; not a shoe-latchet will he take from him; it shall never be said, that the King of *Sodom* made *Abraham* rich: He had a very high esteem of the Name of God; O God alone shall have the honour (saith *Abraham*) of making *Abraham* rich; it shall never be said the King of *Sodom* made *Abraham* rich: He had a great care of the Name of God: So if men would carry the sense of Gods Name with them into the World, and the things thereof, they would use the World as if they us'd it not: It shall never be said that a base unworthy way made me rich; no, God shall have the honour of it, and Faith shall have the honour of it, and

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and Prayer shall have the honour on't.

Seventhly, Go to the Lord, and beg of the Lord to fulfil his promises: Now Gods promises are very many this way; but I shall only turn you unto that in the last of *Zech. 20.* a promise spoken concerning the latter times: *In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, holiness unto the Lord.* The bells of the horses; upon the bells of the Temple? no, upon the bells of the horses, your Carriers horses: In that day shall there be holiness upon the bells of the horses, holiness unto the Lord: And the pots in the Lords house shall be like the bowls before the Altar; yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah, shall be holiness unto the Lord of Hosts: Every pot in Jerusalem, every pot in your house, shall be holiness unto the Lord: go to God to fulfil this promise; O there is such a promise lies for the latter times, let's go to God to fulfil this promise, that holiness may be written upon all our pots, and then shall we use this world as if we us'd it not.

Eighthly and lastly, Consider what a good thing it is to use this world as if we us'd it not.

Thereby you shall be able for to want, and to part with the world with ease: *I know how to want,* saith Paul, and *I know how to abound.* Truly give me but this grace, and I will speak with Paul; give me but this grace, to use the world as if I us'd it not, and I will say with him, Now I know how to want, and how to abound: If you use your Relation as if you us'd it not, you will part with your Relation more easily; if you use your Land as if you us'd it not, you will part with it more easily: Christians, parting times are coming, the Lord knows how soon we may be parted from the bosom of our dearest

est Relations, and from all our enjoyments that we have here; would you part easily when the parting blow shall come? Now use the world as if you us'd it not: now use the world as if you us'd it not.

Thereby also you shall have more of the world, have it in more abundance, by using the world as if you us'd it not, you shall be no loser; I have sometimes stood and wondred at *Abraham*; for we say, that the rouling stone gathers no Moss. *Abraham* went out of his own Country; God commands him in *Gen. 12.* to forsake his Kindred, and his Fathers house: So *Abraham* departed, v. 4. and *Abraham* came, and they went out to go into the Land of Canaan, and into the Land of Canaan they came, v. 5. And at v. 10. *There was a famine in the Land*, and *Abraham* went down into Egypt. A famine in the Land! why, but did not God call him thither? yes, *Go into a Land that I shall shew thee*, v. 1. God shewed him thither, yet there he met with a famine.

Obs. So one may have a clear call from God, and yet meet with a great deal of afflictions in the way that God calls them to; he goes down to Egypt to sojourn there: When he came into Egypt, the Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues, because of Sarah *Abraham's* Wife. At v. 18. And Pharaoh called *Abraham*, and said, what is this? now therefore behold thy Wife, take her, and go thy way: And they sent him away, and his Wife, and all that he had, ver. 10. Well, away they go; And *Abraham* went out of Egypt, he, and his Wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the South, v. 2. And *Abraham* was very rich in Cattel, in silver, and in gold: A strange thing, to grow rich in Cattel: How could he drive his Cattel up

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up and down from Egypt to Canaan, and up and
down the Country? Yes, thus removing at the
Command of the Lord, Living in Tents, and using
the world as if he us'd it not; thereby, I say, you
shall have the world, and have it in more abun-
dance.

Yea, thereby you shall have it in a better edition,
in a better impression, the world, and the things
thereof, sanctified unto you; use the world as if you
us'd it not, and the things thereof, as if you us'd
them not, you shall have them in a better edition
sanctified to you.

Yea, thereby you shall have that which is better
than all, you shall have the mind of Christ; And
we hope we have the mind of Christ, saith the Apostle;
we believe we have the mind of Christ; who have
the mind of Christ saith David, in Psa. 119. Lord,
saith he, I am a stranger in this earth, hide not thy Com-
mandments from me: Here's his argument, in Isa. 28.
Whom shall he teach knowledge? &c. 9. And whom shall he
make to understand Doctrine? them that are weaned from
the milk, and drawn from the breasts, them shall he
teach knowledge, and them shall he make to under-
stand doctrine.

I'll say no more but this, thereby you shall be
happy indeed; use the world as if you us'd it not,
and thereby you shall be happy: Who is the happy
man in the world? He's an unhappy man that can con-
temn, and be contented, saith the Heathen Seneca. He's
the happy man in the world, that can use the world as
if he us'd it not.

And yet again ile repeat that, Thereby you shall
be fit to suffer in suffering times. Suffering times
are upon us, and by using the world as if we us'd it
not,

not, you shall be fit to suffer : And therefore again I say, As you do desire that you may be fit to suffer in suffering times. That you may be happy. That you may have the mind of Christ. That you may have the things of the world in a better Edition. That you may have them in more abundance. That you may know how to want and part with all things easily. Now use the world as if you used it not.

And if nothing else will do, I beseech you take these two Arguments that the Apostle here uses, and lay them with all their weight upon your Souls, lay them with your experience. Beloved, this I must say to you, The Holy Ghost doth never spend reasons in vain, the Holy Ghost hath no wast of reasons in Scripture. Here are two Reasons, *The time is short.* Use the world as if you us'd it not, *For the time is short.* Use the world, for the Fashion of the world passeth away. 'Tis Scripture reason, and there is no waste in it, and therefore lay it unto your own experience : And if you desire now to get this holy frame of Spirit, and to use the world as if you us'd it not : go and say unto your own Souls, Come O my Soul, why should I not use the world as if I us'd it not? indeed the time is short, Ah the time of our opportunity is short ; The time of our Spirituall enjoyment is short ; The time of this life is short. The time is short O my Soul, and therefore why should I not use the world as if I us'd it not!

And come O my Soul, the Fashion of this world passeth away : And this I have experience of, witness all the Revolutions of these later times, how the Fashion of all things hath past away : We have

seen

should take off our hearts from the love of it. 232

seen in these late Revolutions the Fashion of this world passeth away, and therefore come O my Soul, why should you not use the world as if you us'd it not: You have now *Riches*, it passeth away! *Relations* pass away: And *Friends* pass away; And *Creature-Comforts*, they pass away: The Fashion of this world ~~it~~ passeth away, and therefore O my soul, now use the world as if you us'd it not. Thus the Apostle speaks, this is his Argument, and these are his Arguments; And so say I, Brethren and Beloved, The time is short, It remaineth therefore, that both they that have *Wives*, be as though they had none; And they that weep, as though they wept not; And they that rejoyce, as though they rejoyced not; And they that buy as though they possessed not; And they that use this world as not abusing it; For the Fashion of this world passeth away.

S E R M.

SERM. VI.

Mens VVrath against Gods
People, shall turn to
Gods Praise.

*Psal. 76. 10. Surely the Wrath of man shall
praise thee, the remainder of wrath shalt thou
restrain.*

IN this Psalm we have a Declaration of the Ma-
jesty and glorious appearance of God, in and
for his Church and people. *In Judah is God
known, his Name is great in Israel, in Salem also is
his Tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Sion, ver.
1, 2.* Where God appears as a Captain and General
unto his people, and as a Judg.

As a Captain and General; therefore in ver. 3.
*There (In Syon) brake he the Arrows of the Bow, the
Shield, and the Sword, and the Battel. Thou art more
glorious and excellent then the Mountains of prey. At
thy rebuke O God of Jacob, both the Chariot and Horse
are cast into a dead sleep.*

As a Judg, at ver. 3. *Thou didst cause Judgment to be
heard from Heaven, the Earth feared and was still: When
God arose to Judgment, to save all the meek of the earth.*

But

But if God do thus appear, to, and for, and with his people, why doth he suffer the wrath and anger of men to be so much against his people?

Why he answers it in ver. 10. *Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee, the remainder of wrath thou shalt restrain.* Though God do suffer the Enemies of his people to be very angry and wrathful with his people, yet that wrath of theirs shall turn unto the praise of God, and the remainder of their wrath God will restrain. From whence then I take up this Observation.

Observ. Though there be a great deal of anger or wrath in the hearts of men against the people of God: Yet God will either turn their wrath unto his own praise, or restrain their wrath.

For the clearing and prosecuting whereof, two things will fall under our consideration.

First, That there is a great deal of wrath and anger in the hearts of men against the people of God.

Secondly, That this wrath God will either turn to his praise, or restrain the same.

First of all, There is a great deal of wrath and anger in the hearts of men against the people of God. A great deal of anger; so much anger as doth amount to wrath, for wrath is the height of anger: Now the men of the world, they are wrath with the people of God, not only angry, but *wrathfully displeased*, Psal. 124. *Had not the Lord bin on our side when men rose up against us, then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us.*

There is not only *Wrath* in their hearts against the people of God, but such wrath as doth amount to *Rage*. For as wrath is the height of Anger, so *Rage* is the height of *Wrath*. Now there is *Rage* also

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also in the hearts of men against the people of God.
Why doth the Heavens Rage? Psal. 2. They Rage.

And there is not only Rage in the hearts of the wicked against the people of God; but such Rage as doth amount to Fury. For as Rage is the height of Wrath, so Fury is the height of Rage. Now there is Fury in the hearts of men against the people of God. In *Dan. 3. 13.* Then *Nebuchadnezzar* in his *Rage and Fury* commanded to bring *Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego*, and they brought these men before the King, v. 19. Then was *Nebuchadnezzar full of Fury.*

Yea, there is not only a Fury in the hearts of men against the people of God, but there is a Hatred in their hearts against the Saints and people of God. For as Fury is the height of Rage, so Rage settled, is Hatred. Hatred is the worst of all, 'tis settled anger, Wrath, and Rage, and Fury. Now wicked men they do hate the Saints. In *Psal. 24. 21.* Evil shall slay the wicked, and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate. Yea, saith *David*, *Psal. 25. Consider mine Enemies, for they are many, and they hate me with cruel hatred, v. 19.* So that thus then we see in the general, that there is a great deal of Anger and wrath in the hearts of men against the people of God.

Well, but for the opening of this a little further, 'Twill be said, what kind of Anger and Hatred is there in the hearts of men against the people of God?

And how comes it to pass that they should so hate and be so wrathfully displeased with the Saints and people of God, that do them no hurt?

To give you some account of this: First of all, If you ask what kind of Anger and Hatred, or Wrath there

there is in the hearts of men against the people of God.

Answer, 1. It is a violent wrath and anger: *proud and violent* men are risen up against me.

2. As it is a *proud and violent* wrath or anger, so it is a *fraudulent and deceitful* wrath: *Bloudy and deceitful* men shall not live out half their dayes; speaking of the Enemies of the People of God. Their wrath is not only violent, but there is a fraudulency that is joyned therewithal.

3. As it is a deceitful and a fraudulent wrath and anger: So it is a *Mortal* wrath and Anger that is in their hearts towards the people of God. A *devouring, consuming, and destroying* wrath. *They eat up my people as they eat bread*, Psal. 14. If the Lord had not bin with us, they had *swallowed us up quick*, Psal. 124. And they shall *kill you*, saith our Saviour Christ. So that this wrath and anger that is in the hearts of wicked men, It is a mortal, deadly, destroying, consuming and devouring wrath.

4. As it is a mortal, deadly, destroying and consuming wrath: So it is a *Blaspheming* wrath. How long shall foolish men *Blaspheme* thy Name? *Rabshakab* was angry, and he did not only Blaspheme the people of God, but God himself. *Where is now your God?*

5. As their wrath is a *Blaspheming* wrath, so it is an *unreasonable* wrath. Why do the Heathen rage? *Why?* Why they have no reason for it. *Why* do the Heathen rage, and the People imagine a *vain thing*? 'Tis a *vain thing*, they have no reason for it. The wrath that wicked men have against the people of God, and their Anger, it is most unreasonable.

6. As it is an unreasonable wrath and anger; so it is an *insulting* wrath and anger, whereby they do

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insult over the poor people of God, *Psal. 137.* By the Rivers of Babylon we sat down, yea, we wept when we remembered Sion. We hanged our Harps upon the Willows, For there they that carryed us away Captive, required of us a Song: And they that wasted us, required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the Songs of Sion; insulting over them. And so in *Rev. 11.* They will make merry, and send gifts one to another, rejoycing over the dead Witnesses. 'Tis an insulting wrath and anger that they are filled withal.

bu 7. And then farther, As it is an *Insulting* wrath and anger; so the wrath and anger that is in the hearts of wicked men towards the Saints, it is an universal wrath and anger. For though they be angry with one person, their anger doth not stay there, but it riseth unto all the party of the Saints. *Hamans* wrath began with *Mordecai*, in *Hest. 3. 5.* And when *Haman* saw that *Mordecai* bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was *Haman* full of wrath. What then: And he thought scorn to lay hands on *Mordecai* alone, For they had shewed him the people of *Mordecai*: wherefore *Haman* sought to destroy all the Jews. So wicked men, they begin (it may be) to be angry with one Saint: but from that one, their wrath and anger doth arise to them all. 'Tis an universal wrath against all the Seed of the Godly: They take occasion from one, and fall upon all.

8. And then lastly, As it is an universal wrath and anger, so it is an implacable, an unappeasable, never-dying, and everlasting wrath, *Amos 1. 11.* Thus saith the Lord, For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because he did pursue his Brother with the Sword, and did cast off all pity, and his anger did tear perpetually, and kept his wrath for ever. It is an everlasting wrath, wicked men will not be appeased. This

This is a certain Rule, The more there is of Religious end that any evil work hath, the more lasting, holding, and continuing is that evil work. Now in Joh. 16. 2. Our Saviour saith, *They shall put you out of the Synagogue; yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God Service.* The Syniack reads it so, That whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth bring a Sacrifice unto God. In Exod. 8. 20. saith the Lord by Moses, unto Pharaoh, *Let my people go that they may serve me.* Now this is the errand that Moses hath: Pharaoh answers it thus, ver. 25. *And Pharaoh called for Moses, and for Aaron, and said, go ye Sacrifice to your God in the Land.* Moses saith in the Name of the Lord, *Let my people go that they may serve me:* Pharaoh understands it concerning Sacrifice, and therefore saith he, go and offer Sacrifice unto your God. And indeed the thing Sacrifice hath the same word. The word that is used here in this 16th of John, *Whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth λατρεῖαν προσφέρειν τῷ θεῷ.* Now in Ephes. 5. the Sacrifice that Christ offered, hath the same word, Walk in love, as Christ hath also loved us, and hath given himself προσφορὰν ἡς, θυσιαν, An Offering and a Sacrifice. So that as good Authors do observe, What Christ saith here, *They shall think that they do God good Service:* 'tis as much as if he should say, *They shall think when they kill you, they shall offer a great Sacrifice unto God.* But this is the thing I bring it for, The more Religious end any evil action hath, the more holding and continuing is that evil action. Now wicked men for their malice, they shall have a Religious end; they shall think they do God good service: their malice therefore, and their wrath against the people of God, is never dying, and an everlasting wrath. Thus you see what kind of wrath it is.

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It is a violent anger : It is a fraudulent anger ! It is a Mortal anger : It is a blasphemous anger : It is an unreasonable anger : It is an insulting anger : It is an universal anger against all the people of God, upon one mans occasion : And it is an everlasting and a never dying anger.

But then secondly, How comes it to pass that there should be such a deal of anger and wrath in the hearts of men against the people of God ; for the people of God are a quiet and a peaceable people.

'Tis true, so they are : But who more quiet, and peaceable, and meek, than our Lord and Saviour Christ ; he lift not up his voice in the streets, and yet who ever bare more anger and wrath from men than He.

Yea, the Saints are not only quiet, meek and peaceable, but beneficial to the men where they live. *The innocent delivers the Land : Yet notwithstanding, saith Solomon in Eccles. 9. I have seen a sore evil under the Sun, there was a little City, and few men within it : And there came a great King against it, and besieged it and built great Bulwarks against it : Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the City, yet no man remembered that same poor man. Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength, nevertheless the poor mans Wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.* So though the Saints and people of God do deliver a Nation, and are exceeding beneficial to the people where they live, and where they are, yet they shall be despised, yet there shall be wrath and malice in the hearts of men against the Saints of God.

But you will say, how doth this come to pass, that there should be such a deal of wrath and malice in the hearts of men against the people of God ?

First of all, the Saints and people of God, and the
men

men of the world, they are directly contrary one unto another : they are contrary in their Birth, and in their Original. For the men of the world, they are of their Father the Devil, who was a Murderer: But the Saints and people of God, God is their Father.

They are not only contrary in their original, but they are contrary in their principles. For the one are the Seed of the Woman, and the other the Seed of the Serpent, whose Principles are contrary. The Seed of the Bond-woman at the best, and the Seed of the Free-Woman.

Yea, they are not only contrary in their Principle; but they are contrary in their Worship: For the Worship of the World is a pompous and a carnal Worship, but the Worship of the Saints is Spiritual, *Such worshippers doth the Father seek, that Worship him in Spirit and truth.*

And as their Worship is contrary one unto another, so their deeds and their practices are contrary. For *why* (saith the Apostle) *did Cain kill his Brother Abel, but because his deeds were evil, and his Brothers good?* Now one contrary seeks to destroy another. Why these are contrary; They are contrary one to another, contrary in their Original; Contrary in their Principles; Contrary in their Worship; Contrary in their lives and Practices: And therefore no wonder that there is such a deal of wrath and anger in the hearts of the men of the World against the Saints and people of God.

But secondly, The Saints and people of God, they do not regard the men of the World, and the men of the World they think so. Now for high and lofty men to be slighted, and not regarded, this makes them angry. In *Dan. 3.* when the three children would not bow down unto the Image, *There are certain Jews*

(say they to the King) *that thou hast set over the Affairs of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; These men O King have not regarded thee.* Why they think now, that if the people of God don't bow down to their Commandments, and to their Idols, that they don't regard the Magistrate, *These men have not regarded thee:* And the truth is, Godly men that are the Saints and people of God, they cannot regard them, *For blessed is the man* (saith the Holy Ghost) *that regardeth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lyes.* God hath given a blessing to those that regard not the proud. Now wicked men cannot bear this, that they should not be regarded; high and great men of the world, that they should not be regarded; and therefore no wonder that there is such a deal of wrath and anger in their hearts against the people of God.

3. The Saints and people of God, they do withdraw from the men of the world, and do separate from them; *Come out from among them, and be ye separate, touch no unclean thing.* Now when we withdraw from men, and from their Worship: We do condemn their Worship; and the men of the world don't love to be condemned. Noah condemned the world; And by the separation of the Saints from them, they do condemn them, and they don't love (I say) to be condemned. To separate from them, and from their Worship, this they cannot bear. The Saints do separate from them, and therefore there is such a deal of anger and wrath in their hearts against them.

4. As the Saints and people of God do separate and withdraw from them, upon which they are much provoked: So the Saints and people of God do hinder them in their proceedings. A man doth not
love

love to be hindered in his proceedings: the Saints and people of God, they do hold wicked mens hands that they cannot proceed, hold their hands by their Prayers. I remember a story of Mr. Tyndal, that blessed first Translator of the Bible into English, that dyed a Martyr in *Flanders*, being then at *Antwerp*, and much respected by the Merchants there. There was a great report of a certain juggler that could bring a dish of meat from any Princes Table, and so set the Table that they were at with several Dishes, from several Princes Tables: Pray, saith Tyndal to the Merchants, will you let me be at your Supper; Yes, and so they carried him: And when he was there, the Juggler tryed his skill, and sweat, and took a great deal of pains; but saith he, I cannot do it, there is some man here that doth hold my hands. And Tyndal only set himself to this, to believe that he should not do it. I speak it only to this, that the people of God, they hold their hands. And in this 76. Psalm, *The men of might, they find not their hands. There brake he the Arrows of the Bow, the Shield, and the Sword, and the Battel: The stout-hearted are spoiled, They have slept their sleep, and none of the men of might have found their hands.* Why? Why there brake he the Bow and the Arrow. There. Where? In *Salme*. In the Assembly of the Saints, by their Prayers. Now men cannot endure to be hindred in their proceedings. The Saints do it, and therefore there is such a great deal of anger and wrath in the hearts of them against the people of God.

5. But then further, As the Saints and people of God do hinder them in their proceedings, which doth anger them; So they do destroy their Gods, destroy their Idols. Men of all things cannot endure to have their Gods destroyed; how angry were they

they when *Paul* came and Preacht down the Gods of *Diana*? then they were in a Rage, *Oh great is Diana*, *Paul* Preaches down our Gods, and destroyes our Gods. The people of God do destroy the Gods of the wicked, no wonder therefore that they are so provok't against the Saints and people of God.

6. As the people of God do destroy their Gods, and their Worship, so they do destroy their sins and lusts. The Saints are enemies unto all their lusts. Wicked men cannot endure to be kept from their lusts: but if they be hindred from their lusts, kept in and restrained from their lusts, what say they then? In *Psal. 2. Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their Cords from us.* These Puritans, they will not let us play upon the Sabbath day, they will not let us have leave to dance about a May-pole, they put Cords upon us, and bring us into bonds, and take away our liberty. *Why do the Heathen rage, &c. The Kings of the Earth set themselves, and the Rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his Anointed.* Why, wherein is it exprest? Why they say, *Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.* The people of God are great enemies to their wickedness, and therefore they are so angry; full and furious against the people of God.

7. As the people of God are enemies unto all their lusts, so the men of the World they are enemies unto the Saints, unto all their waies, and duties, and graces. The Saints are a praying people: The men of the World are Enemies to Prayer: Forms of Prayer they can endure, but the power of Prayer they cannot bear.

8. The Saints and people of God are righteous in their Generation: The men of the World cannot endure the truth of the Generation, the Grace of the
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Generation, the righteousness of the Generation, they cannot endure it.

9. The Saints and people of God, they have, and they are stamp't with the Image of God: the Image of Christ is stamp't upon them; and the more that any man is stamp't with the Image of God, the more the men of the world hate him. Why there are the footsteps of God in the Creatures; man at the Creation was made after the Image of God, now being raised again by Christ, the very image of God is stamp't upon the Saints, and wicked men cannot endure to see the Image of God; the more they see the Image of God shining forth in any man, the more angry they are. But now the Saints, they have the Image of God stamp't upon them, and therefore no wonder that they are thus angry. And thus you see what kind of wrath it is that is in the hearts of the men of the world against the people of God: and how it comes to pass that there is such a deal of wrath in the hearts of wicked men against the people of God.

But then secondly, Will God let wicked men alone in this their wrath and anger against the people of God.

No, but saith the second part of the Doctrine, the Lord he will either turn their wrath and anger unto his own praise, or he will restrain it. You have both here in the Text; thou wilt turn their anger unto thy praise O Lord, and the remnant of their wrath, thou wilt restrain. Either God will turn their wrath unto his own praise, or he will restrain it. I use to express it thus, by the Miller that lets the water run: So much water as will serve his turn to grind the Corn, he lets it run, the rest he doth restrain, and don't let it run. So the Lord doth let the

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the wrath of man run so much as may grind his corn, so much as may serve his turn, so much as may work to his praise : The remnant he doth restrain, either he will work the wrath and anger of men to his own praise, or he will restrain the same.

Sometim^s he will restrain it : In *Isa. 27. v. 8.* speaking of the afflictions of the people of God : *In measure when it shooteth forth wilt thou debase with it; he stayeth his rough wind, in the day of the East-wind :* Consider that expresseion, *He stayeth his rough wind, in the day of the East-wind.* The East-wind is an obnoxious wind, a hurtful wind, a piercing wind, and a wasting wind. Why now this East-wind may blow but mildly, and it may blow roughly : Why, saith the Lord, when wicked men that are rough, and when they are very rough, God will stay his rough wind in the day of his East-wind : Though it be a day of Gods East-wind, and wicked men are very rough, God will stay his rough wind : The wrath and anger of wicked men is his rough wind, but God will stay his rough wind in the day of his East-wind : Some times he will restrain it.

Some times again he will turn their wrath and anger unto his own praise ; and for that, I'll only turn to the third of *Dan.* you see how angry the King was when the three children would not bow down unto his Image, *v. 13.* Then *Nebuchadnezzar* in his rage and fury commanded to bring *Shadrach*, &c. at the 19th ver. Then was *Nebuchadnezzar* full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against *Shadrach*, &c. and he commanded the most mighty men that were in his Army, to bind *Shadrach*, &c. and to cast them into the burning fiery Furnace : what was the issue ? God let this wrath go on ; but in the end, see how it turned to Gods praise ; when

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Nebuchadnezzar saw what he had done, Therefore, saith he, I make a Decree, that every People, Nation and Language, which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill, but there is no other God that can deliver after this sort. Thus the rage and wrath of the King turned to the praise of God.

But you will say then, how will the Lord turn the wrath of men unto his praise? 'tis a day of much wrath, and of great anger in the hearts of men: Wicked men are full of wrath and anger at this day against the people of God; 'tis good news, that God will either restrain it, or turn it to his praise: But how will God turn the rage and wrath of wicked men unto the praise of God? and what assurance may we have of this? and what is our duty that flows from hence?

First of all, If you ask what way God will turn the wrath of men against his people to his own praise: I answer, many ways; I shall but name them.

First, Thereby the holiness of God shall be the more exalted by the wrath of men: God spake in his holiness, I will divide *Shechem*, and measure out the valley of *Succoth*: The holiness of God, wicked men they are but dishclouts for to make clean the Vessels of the Sanctuary; but their wrath, and by their anger and rage, they shall make clean the Saints: These dishclouts shall make clean the Saints: Thus Gods holiness shall be thereby exalted, so many Enemies, so many Schoolmasters.

2. Thereby also the power of the Lord shall be declar'd and manifested, by the wrath and anger of wicked men against the people of God: Is it not a great

great deal of Gods power to preserve the poor Saints in the midst of all their rage; when wicked men have power, yet that the poor Saints should be preserved, hereby the power of the Lord is the more declared.

3. By the wrath and anger of wicked men, thereby the anger and Justice of God is justified: Who will not justify the anger of God against wicked men? when wicked men are so angry with his children; O this justifies the anger of God against them: why, you are angry with my children, and just therefore it is that I should be angry with you.

Thereby the patience of the Lord is magnified. If one should stand by, and see a man smite his child; be very angry and wrathful, and smite his child, and not meddle, would not you say, This man were very patient. So, that God should see so much anger against his own Children: O the patience of God is magnified, that can bear with wicked men in this manner!

5. Hereby also the Mercy, Grace, and goodness of the Lord is exalted. The free Grace and Mercy of God doth discover it self, and is exalted both towards wicked men, and towards the Saints.

The free Grace of God towards wicked men, God doth sometimes convert wicked men in the midst of their rage, wrath and malice against the Saints, witness *Paul*.

Sometimes men are convinc'd by their very injurious dealings with the people of God. I remember in the Book of Martyrs, there's a story of *James Abbes*, that was cruelly handled by his enemies: and when he was dead, the enemy was troubled in Conscience, and cryed out, I am damn'd, I am damn'd; *James Abbes* is sav'd, and I am damn'd; *James Abbes*

is sav'd and I am damn'd. Men sometimes snore so loud in their sleep, that they wake themselves; sometimes men are converted, Jaylors converted, and Jaylors Relations converted by their unreasonable dealings with the Saints and people of God.

And hereby the grace and mercy of God is magnified towards his children: O that they should be preserved in the midst of all the Rage and Malice of wicked and unreasonable men; here's the grace and mercy of God towards them. Thus the goodness, mercy and grace of God is exalted, both towards wicked men, and towards good men.

Again, From the wrath and anger of wicked men against the people of God, thereby the providence of God is very much magnified. *Human* was very angry with *Mordecai*, and then *Mordecai* should have bin cut off; And that night the King could not sleep. Heres one providence.

Well then, when he could not sleep, he calls for the Records, (here's another Providence) and there he hits upon the place where there was mention made of the good deeds of *Mordecai*; and so *Mordecai* was spared. But thus the wrath and anger of men doth draw out the providence of God, and it is magnified thereby.

Thereby also the Faithfulness of God is declared, and magnified, and manifested. The Faithfulness of God: for God hath threatned to destroy the enemies of his people, and hath promised to preserve his people. When the enemies rage and are destroyed, God is faithful in fulfilling his threatnings: When the people of God are preserved, God is faithful in his promise. Thus by letting out the rage and anger of wicked men against the People of God, the faithfulness of God is magnified. And now is the threat-

threatning fulfilled, God is faithful. Now is the promise fulfilled, God is faithful. And thus you see how the Lord doth turn the rage, and anger, and wrath of wicked men, and the men of the World unto his own praise.

But then secondly, What assurance have we of this? 'Tis a very comfortable thing, in the day of mens wrath and anger, that all this anger and wrath should turn to Gods praise, or be restrained. But what assurance have we of this, that it shall be so?

Assurance you have in the Text. *Surely* the wrath of man shall turn to his praise. That same word *Surely*. I but what assurance have we of it?

'Tis very certain that God will be fearful in praises. 'Tis certain, and very certain, that God will be above wicked men in the thing wherein they behave themselves proudly. But besides this,

First of all, You have the assurance of Christs Death and Merit. If you look upon the death of Christ, and the issues thereof, you may see it, and be assur'd of it. Was there ever more anger and malice let out upon any man, than upon Christ in his death? They were angry to the utmost; And did ever anger or malice turn more to the praise of God? What one thing was there that ever turned more to the praise of God than the death of Christ, and the anger and malice of those that brought him to death? Why now Christ by his sufferings hath merited this, That if we be conformable unto him in sufferings; As his sufferings, and as the wrath that brought him to suffer did turn to the praise of God; So that wrath that brings us to sufferings, shall turn to the praise of God. This is a great matter, and here is much in it, and we may be assur'd on't, when we see and feel the wrath and anger of men, if we be conformable in
our

our sufferings unto Christs sufferings : Then as the wrath of men in bringing Christ to suffer, did turn to the praise of God; so the wrath of men, in bringing the Saints now to suffering, shall turn to the praise of God, you have the assurance of the death of Christ for it.

2. As you have the assurance of Christs death and merit for it, so you have the assurance of the Fathers design. God would not suffer men to be so wrathful and malicious against his people, if he did not intend to turn it unto his praise; God hath a design upon all their anger: God hath bid them to be angry (if I may so speak) and why? if he had not a design to turn it to his praise? The Lord bid *Shimei* curse *David*: Who was it that bid *Shimei* curse *David*? God: And who was it that sent *Joseph* into *Egypt*? God sent him: The wrath, and anger and envy of his Brethren indeed were instruments, but God sent him. God had a design upon their anger, and upon their envy and wrath, in *Rev. 16.* you find that three unclean Spirits that came out of the mouth of the false Prophet, and Dragon, and the Beast, they stir up the Kings of the Earth to battel; and they are the Spirits of Devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the Kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battel of that great day of God Almighty. They go forth to stir up men to battel, but in *verse 16.* 'tis God that gathers them: *Behold I come as a Thief, blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, &c. and he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebreu tongue Armageddon*: God had a hand upon their hand; God gathered them, in *Micb. 4. 11.* *Now also many Nations are gathered against thee, that say: Let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion.*

176 *Mens Wrath against Gods people*

Zion. Let her be defiled, her's anger enough, but
saith he, *verse 12.* *They know not the thoughts of the*
Lord, neither understand they his counsel; For he shall
gather them as the sheaves into the floor. He shall gather
them, in the 11th. verse, 'tis said: Now alio ma-
ny Nations are gathered against thee, that say, let
her be defiled, and let our eye look upon *Zion*; But
they know not the thoughts of the Lord: They are
gathering together against the people of God; and
God is gathering to thresh them: *They gather toge-*
ther, God hath a design upon their gathering; God
gathers them: So in *Ezek. 38.* you have there the
story of *Gog and Magog*, that came up against the
people of the Lord in a great multitude; and they
came up to spoil: Therefore *verse 14.* Son of man
prophecie, and say unto *Gog*, Thus saith the Lord
God, in that day, when my people *Israel* dwelleth
safely, shalt thou not know it? and thou shalt come
from thy place, out of the North parts, Thou and
many people with thee, all of them riding upon
Horses, a great company, and a mighty Army, and
thou shalt come against my people *Israel* as a cloud,
to cover the Land, it shall be in the latter daies:
And *I will bring thee against my Land; Why? That*
the Heathen may know me, when I shall be sancti-
fied in thee O Gog before their eyes, verse 11. Thou
shalt say, *I will go up to the Land of unwalled Vil-*
lages, I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell
safely, &c. to take a spoil, and to take a prey; But
see, the Lord hath another design, Thou shalt come
up against my people Israel, as a cloud to cover the Land,
it shall be in the latter daies, and I will bring thee a-
gainst my Land: Why? That the Heathen may know
me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before
their eyes: And in verse 23. Thou wilt I magnifie my
self &

self, and sanctifie my self, and I will be known in the eyes of many Nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord. Here's Gods design, God doth let out the wrath and anger of wicked men against his people, and he hath this design, that his Name may be sanctified: So that you have this assurance also, the great design of God.

3. You have the assurance of Gods Zeal: The zeal of the Lord of Hosts shall do this: The God whom we serve is a zealous God. Zeal is angered Love. Now there are three things that God doth love especially. He loves his Truth; he loves his Worship; and he loves his People. When wicked men do prevail against the People of God, They scorn the Truth, they defile his Worship, they persecute his People: I say, these three things God loves in the World. But now God will not suffer these things that he loves thus, to be alwaies trampled on: for he is a zealous God, and therefore you may build upon it, you may be assured of it: That either he will restrain the rage of men, or he will turn their Wrath and Anger unto his own Praise.

But then, Thirdly, Suppose all this: What is our Duty that doth flow from hence?

First of all, if that there be such a deal of anger and wrath in the hearts of men against the Saints and people of God; wonder not at it, be not offended when you see it: it was alwaies so from the beginning: God hath put enmity, and the enmity that God hath put between the seeds, shall stand; Cain began betime, and as *Luther* saith, Cain will be killing his Brother *Abel* to the worlds end: It hath alwaies been so, and do you think there shall be less anger in the hearts of the men of the world a-

178 *Mens Wrath against Gods people,*
against the people of God now in the latter daies;
No, rather more; in Rev. 12. tis said, *The Devil
will come down, having great wrath, because he know-
eth that he hath but a short time.* The shorter the De-
vils time is, the more his wrath will be in his In-
struments: Why now we are fallen in the latter
times, and therefore his anger must be greater
now. *Aspin* thinks that the anger, and wrath, and
persecution of the wicked, will be greatest at the
last: saith he, The persecution of the Primitive
times was very sharp: But afterwards there follow-
ed the persecution of the *Arrians*, and that was
sharp: But the last persecution, is the Persecution
of Antichrist, and that shall be the sharpest: And
we find in the 11th of the *Revelations*, speaking of
the latter daies, That the Nations are angry, verse
18. *And the Nations were angry, and thy wrath is
come.* That's well, Gods wrath goes with their an-
ger: But the Nations were angry, speaking of the
latter daies. There are three or four things that will
raise the anger and wrath of Antichrist in the latter
daies.

There is the Prophefying of the Witnesses: The
Witnesses Prophefie, and when they have finished
their Prophefie, the Beast shall kill them; and
being slain, they shall make merry over the Wit-
nesses that Prophefied, verse 10. and rejoyce over
them, and shall send gifts one to another: Why, be-
cause these two Prophets tormented them that dwell
on the earth: the Protestants and reformed Churches
do torment by their prophefie. So that there is one
thing that doth irrage them.

Another thing that doth raise the anger of the An-
tichristian party in the world in the latter daies, is
the separation: For there shall be the greatest se-
paration

paration that ever was; Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. There shall be the greatest separation, and that provokes them.

3. Another thing that shall provoke the Antichristian party in the latter daies is this: That they shall power forth the vials: The Angels that come out of the Temple, they shall have an hand in pouring out the vials: And what then? Why then, the men of the world, they shall be tormented, and gnash their teeth, and bite their tongues for pain. The pouring out of the vials is another thing where in they shall be instrumental for the angering of the Bestial party. But then the

Fourth thing is, The setting up the Kingdom of Christ: So you have it in *Revel. 11*. The seventh Angel sounded, and there were great voices in Heaven, saying: The Kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever, &c. What then? *And the Nations were angry.* When Christs Kingdom comes to be set up, then the Nations are angry: 'Tis the setting up the Kingdom of Christ that angers the Nations: and therefore in the second *Psalme*, Way do the Heathen rage, and the Kings and Princes take counsel together? It follows, I will set my King upon his holy Hill, I will set up my Kingdom, and the Kingdom of Christ shall be set up, for all they are so angry at it; I will do it: But this is another thing that shall raise the anger of the men of the world in the latter daies. I but is this so, that there is such a deal of anger and wrath in the hearts of the wicked against the people of God? Be not offended at it, it alwaies was so, and it must be so in the latter daies.

180 *Mens wrath against Gods People,*

But Secondly, If there be so much wrath and anger in the hearts of wicked men against the Saints, Why should we not all make sure of the love of Christ? O the Love of God in Christ will weigh down mens anger! What need I care though men be angry, if God love me; though men frown, so God smile: If God be angry, and wicked men angry too, how shall we bear that? how shall we stand under that? Wicked men are angry, and full of anger, and 'tis a persecuting time, and wicked men are very angry against the Saints, if God be angry too, how shall we bear it? Therefore labour to make sure of the Love of God in Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, If that the wrath and anger of wicked men shall turn to the praise of God, Why should we fear when wicked men are angry? why should we be afraid? When men are angry, we are apt to fear, but in *Isa. 51. Who art thou that art afraid of a man that shall dye, and of the Son of man that shall be made as grass: and forgettest the Lord thy Maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth? &c. Who art thou that art afraid of a man that shall dye? Is that all the Argument? There's another Argument before, verse 7. Hearken unto me ye that know Righteousness, the people in whose heart is my Law, fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings: why? for the Moth shall eat them up like a garment: They shall eat out themselves, as the Moth eats out her self: For the Adversary shall eat them up like a Garment, and the Worm shall eat them like Wool; But my Righteousness, the Gospel of my Righteousness, and the Righteousness of Christ, that's my Righteousness, shall be for ever, and my salvation, from Generation to Generation. Fear not, why God will turn all their wrath and anger unto*

unto his praise. And therefore why should we fear?

But fourthly, If God will turn the wrath and anger of wicked men unto his own praise, why should we not be contented, satisfied, and comforted under all the rage and malice of unreasonable men in such a day as this?

Will you say, O but they are not only angry, but they are furious. Why their fury shall turn to the Lords praise.

You will say, O but they are not only furious, but they hate, and they are enraged, and their rage ascends up to Heaven. All this shall turn to Gods praise.

Their great design is to damp the Spirits of the People of God. But they waxed bold by my bonds, saith Paul, speaking of the Saints.

Their great design is to scatter the people of God: But by the scattering of Gods People shall his truth be scattered. They scatter Gods people, and Gods people scatter Gods truth; it shall turn to his praise.

Their great design is to destroy the Gospel, to suppress the Gospel: But saith Paul, my bonds turned to the furtherance of the Gospel. Thus God will work it to his praise. And therefore when you see the wrath, angry, and malice of wicked men, breaking out to such Persecution; be quiet, be contented, be satisfied, be comforted; all this shall God turn to his praise, or he will restrain it.

But then fifthly, If these things be so, why should we not now stand still and behold the Salvation of God? See what God will do, expect the full

filling of all this, 'tis a day of anger, 'tis a day of great wrath, there is abundance of anger and wrath, and hatred and malice in the hearts of men against the people of God at this day, who doth not see it? Well then Friends, stand still; you know how angry *Pharaoh* was when he followed after the Israelites; and saith *Moses*, stand still and see the Salvation of God. So say I, you shall see all this turn to Gods praise: You shall see the restraining of prayer, turn to the enlarging of Prayer: You shall see the seeking to suppress the Gospel; turn to the furtherance of the Gospel.

Now in such a day as this, be righteous in your places, For saith the Lord, say to the Righteous, It shall go well with him. Say! Who should say it? Why, Ministers say it, Christians say it one to another. Let every man say to himself, Say to the Righteous, It shall go well with him; therefore be righteous in such a day as this.

And then secondly, Fear before the Lord: In such a day of Anger be sure that you fear, and fear before the Lord. Look what is said in *Eccles. 8. Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him.* That fear before him: Whats that? That is, a man that fears the Lord, walking up and down in the presence of God.

But what Case doth he speak to?

Look into the 9th verse, There is a time (saith he) wherein one man ruleth over another to his own hurt: and (saith he) because they rule thus, and sentence against wicked men is not executed speedily, but they go on and prosper in their rule and Govern-
ment;

ment; therefore the heart of the Sons of men is fast-ly set in them to do evil: But saith he, *Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his dayes be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him.* Be sure therefore that you fear the Lord, and that you fear before him; and the more you fear God, and fear before him, the less will you fear men.

But then thirdly (and so I end). Now in such a time, give your self much to prayer. In *Psal. 109. 4.* For my Love they are mine Adversaries, but I give my self unto Prayer. So you read it, But I Prayer. I give my self unto, is not in the Hebrew, but, I Prayer; the sense is good enough. For my love they are my Adversaries, but I give my self to Prayer. Now in such a time as this, when they are angry, and their rage ascends up to Heaven; now do I go to prayer, now do I give my self to prayer. Now then, if it be an angry day with the enemies, now go to Prayer. And in all your Prayers in reference to mens anger and malice, when you go and spread their anger and malice before the great God, aim more at your duty, than at your safety. Look into that fourth of the *Acts*, there you find that they were angry; *Why do the Heathen Rage*, v. 25. (They bring the second Psalm to their purpose) *And the people imagine a vain thing, The Kings of the Earth stood up;* being at Prayer, at v. 29. *And now Lord behold their threatenings.* They spread their threatenings before the Lord: *And now Lord behold their threatenings, and grant unto thy servants.* What, grant safety? No, *Grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy Word:* Its matter of Duty that they pray for. What then? *And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were As-*

scumbled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the Word of God with boldness. Here was Prayer answered presently; they Prayed, and in their prayer, their mind was more upon their duty than upon their safety. They go to God, and spread the threatnings of the enemies before the Lord. And now Lord behold their threatnings. And what then? Now grant that with all boldness: Lets beg Grace to do our Duty. They begged not for safety, but their great request was, That they might have grace to do their duty. So I say, when men are angry: Now let us go to God in Prayer, and in all our Prayers, spreading their anger and threatnings before the Lord. Yet let our mind be more upon our duty, than upon our safety.

S E R M.

S E R M. VII.

Comfort to Mourners for
the losse of Solemn
Assemblies.

Zeph. 1. 18. *I will gather them that are sorrowful for the Solemn Assembly, who are of thee, to whom the Reproach of it was a burthen.*

THIS Prophet Zephany who lived, not long before the captivity of *Babylon* having Threatned the People of God (the *Jews*) with that calamity, and exhorted them to repent, to return unto God, that they might prevent that eminent evil; both at the last conclude all, with a comfortable and gracious promise unto the people of God.

First, he threatens, and then promiseth: Gods threatnings usually do end in promises; sharpest threatnings, in the sweetest promises.

This Promise here is sweet, and full, and large; wherein you have the mercies promised, and the several branches thereof.

The cause, fountain, and original of these mercies promised.

The persons upon whom these promised Mercies are intailed.

The Mercies promised are very many :

First, the Lord promiseth to return unto his people, *verse 9.* For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may call upon the Name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent.

Then he promiseth to free them from their Judgments : To bring them out of their captivity, *v. 10.* from beyond the Rivers of *Ethiopia*, my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed shall bring mine offering : And at the *15th. verse*, The Lord hath taken away thy judgements, he hath cast out thine enemy.

He promises Pardon, Sanctification, *verse 11, 12, 13.*

He promiseth to gather the poor exiles ; I will gather them that are sorrowful.

He promiseth to destroy all their enemies, *verse 19.* Behold ; at that time I will undo al that afflict thee : Thus you have the Mercies promised.

The Cause, and Fountain, and Original of all these Mercies : The mighty Presence of the Lord, and his Love unto his People, *verse 15.* The King of *Israel*, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee, Thou shalt not see eyil any more, *verse 17.* The Lord thy God in the midst of thee, is mighty, he will save, he will rejoyce over thee with joy, he will rest in his Love, he will joy over thee with singing.

As for the persons that these promised Mercies are intailed upon, they are poor afflicted people that trust in the Name of the Lord : The people
of

of a pure language, *verse 9.* and *v. 12.* and here in this *verse* such as are sorrowful for the Solemn Assembly, unto whom the reproach of it was a burthen. I will gather them that are sorrowful for the Solemn Assembly, who are of thee; To whom the reproach of it was a burthen.

From whence then I take up this Observation.

Obj. Though God doth sometimes suffer the Solemn Assembly to lye under reproach, yet if his people are fully sensible of that reproach, God will turn their former miseries into after mercies; And he will cause their future comforts to run parallel unto their former troubles. For the clearing whereof three things fall under consideration.

First, That God doth sometimes suffer the Solemn Assembly to lye under reproach.

Secondly, That then those that are true members of the Solemn Assembly, those be very sensible of it, carry it as their burthen.

3. That being so, God will turn their former miseries into after mercies, &c.

First, God doth sometimes suffer the Solemn Assembly to lye under reproach: For the clearing whereof.

First, We must enquire, when the Solemn Assembly may be said to lie under reproach? And

Secondly, Why God doth suffer the Solemn Assembly to lye under reproach at any time?

Quest. First of all, If you ask, when the Solemn Assembly may be said to lye under reproach?

Ans. I answer: Look when the Presence of God is departed from the publick Ordinances, or Solemn Assembly, then the Solemn Assembly doth lye under reproach. The Presence of God in the publick Ordinances or Solemn Assembly, is the glory of

of the Assembly, and when that glory is departed, the Solemn Assembly lies under reproach: though the Word of God be preached in an Assembly, if the Converting, Sanctifying Comforting Presence of God be gone out of the Ordinance, and be not there, it lies under reproach: And though there be Government in a Church, yet if Gods Presence be not in that Government, it lies under reproach, and the Church lies under reproach: That's the first: Look when the Presence of God is departed from the Solemn Assembly, then it lies under Reproach.

2 Look when a Reformation hath been intended, and cannot be accomplish'd, but is staid and hindered, then the Solemn Assembly lies under Reproach. Disappointment is Reproach, *The Children are come to the birth, Isa. 37. and there is no strength to bring forth.* What then? 'tis a day of Rebuke, and Blasphemy, and Reproach. Look therefore when a Church or People have been travelling with a Reformation, and that Reformation proves abortive, stopt and hindered, then that Church and People, or Solemn Assembly lye under Reproach. But

3. And especially: Look when the waies of Zion mourn, and are unfrequented, then doth the Solemn Assembly lye under Reproach, when the waies of *Sion* mourn and are not frequented: It was the case that this Prophet speaks of: he speaks of the Captivity of *Babylon*, the time of the Captivity, what then? why saith the Church in the *Lamentations*, the waies of *Zion* mourn, and are not frequented: When the waies of *Zion* mourn and are not frequented, the people of God are kept from coming together according unto Gods appointment; Then the Solemn Assembly lies under reproach: You read

for the loss of Solemn Assemblies. 189

read in the 5th. of *Joshua*, that when they were come into *Canaan*, the first step *Joshua* circumcised the people, *verse 9*. The Lord said unto *Joshua*, this day have I rolled away the Reproach of *Egypt* from off you; wherefore the name of the place is called *Gilgal* unto this day: *The Reproach of Egypt*; What were they not circumcised in *Egypt*? Yes, the Children of *Israel* were circumcised in *Egypt*, *verse 5*. Now all the people that came out were circumcised; But all the people that were born in the *Wildernesse* by the way as they came forth out of *Egypt*, Them they had not circumcised. They were circumcised in *Egypt*; Why then is this circumcision called the reproach of *Egypt*? Though they were circumcised in *Egypt*, it was at the pleasure of the enemy, they were under bondage, they were not free to the worship of God; But now when they came here into *Canaan*, the first step into *Canaan*, and were circumcised; now they were a free people, and had liberty not only for circumcision, but for all the Ordinances, as they had not in the Land of *Egypt*; they could not sacrifice there, but now they had liberty for all; and now the reproach of *Egypt* was rolled away. So that look when the waies of *Zion* mourn, and are not frequented, and the People of God are kept from the publick Ordinances according to Gods appointment, then the Solemn Assembly lies under Reproach.

4. Again, look when the Saints and people of God, the members of the Solemn Assembly; Look when they are scattered & driven one from another that they cannot meet together, then the Solemn Assembly lyes under reproach: Therefore saith the Prophet here; I will gather them that are sorrowful for the Solemn Assembly; I will gather them to
in how

whom the Reproach of it was a burthen; as if the Reproach lay in the scattering; and at the 20th. verse, *I will bring you again even in the time that I gather you, and will make you a Name and a Praise, in all the places where ye have been put to shame*: So that the scattering of the members of the Solemn Assembly is a Reproach; and then the Solemn Assembly lies under Reproach.

5. And lastly, Look when the state and condition of the Solemn Assembly is such, as that no man cares for it, nor seeks for it, then it lies under Reproach: Such a state sometimes the Solemn Assembly falls into: *This is Zion whom no man seeketh after; This is Zion whom no man careth for: The Magistrate doth not care for it to countenance it: It hath no friends for to help it: if you see a poor man in the streets, neglected, none cares for him, none countenances him, none looks after him to care for him, and to help him: You say he lies under Reproach. So when the Solemn Assembly is in such a case and condition, that none cares for it, nor seeks for the welfare of it: Those that are in place, especially, then the Solemn Assembly lies under Reproach.*

2. Burthen Secondly, Why doth God suffer the Solemn Assembly to lye under Reproach at any time?

1. He will sometimes suffer the Solemn Assembly to lie under Reproach, that he may roll away the Reproach from off the Assembly. There is a twofold Reproach of the Solemn Assembly. There is a sinful Reproach, and there is a penal Reproach of the Solemn Assembly.

Sometimes the Members of the Solemn Assembly are accessory to the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly:

sembly: As sometimes they walk and live so, as that they are a scandal to the very Ordinances: So it is said of the Sons of *Ely*, sinning at the door of the Tabernacle, they made the Sacrifice of God to stink. Possibly Professors may so walk as to make the Sacrifice of God to stink, and are so accessary unto the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly.

Sometimes again they are exceeding barren, and unfruitful under the injoyment of the Solemn Assembly. The Hebrews call the Winter *חור* which signifies *Reproach*, for (say they) the Winter is the Reproach of the Earth, because there is no fruit, nothing but barrenness, and unfruitfulness: and therefore they call the Winter by such a name as signifies Reproach. What a Reproach was it to *Hanna* to be barren: barren women accounted it a Reproach, so Reproachful is a barren life among Professors.

Sometimes again, The Members of the Solemn Assembly, they do bear themselves out in their sins upon their enjoyment of the Solemn Assembly; crying out the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, and are we not delivered to do all these abominations. There is a two-fold bearing of our selves upon the Solemn Assembly. There is a bearing of our selves upon the Solemn Assembly, and upon the publick Ordinances in opposition unto false worshipers; So in *2 Chron. 13*. *Ahijah* bears himself upon the Solemn Assembly, in opposition unto *Jeroboams* false worship: But as for us, the Lord is our God, and we have not forsaken him, and the Priests which minister unto the Lord, are the Sons of Aaron, and the Levites wait upon their business: And they burn unto the Lord every morning, and every evening, burnt Sacrifices and sweet Incense; The Shewbread also see they

they in order upon the pure Table, and the Candlestick of Gold with the Lamps thereof, to burn every evening; for we kept the charge of the Lord our God, but ye have forsaken him. Thus they did bear themselves, and this was not their Reproach, but their Faith, in verse 18. Thus the Children of Israel were brought under at that time, and the Children of Judah prevailed; because they relied upon the Lord God of their Fathers. They did bear themselves upon the Solemn Assembly, and their pure injoyments therein, in opposition to false worship; this was no Reproach. But then there is a bearing of our selves upon the Solemn Assembly, so as to bear us out in our sin, to cry, The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord; Sin and live wickedly, and bear our selves out upon a Solemn Assembly, that we are Members of a Church &c. This is a Reproach: This bearing ones self, upon the Solemn Assembly is a Reproach: And saith Chrysostom, who would not be moved to hear the Blaspheming and Revilings of the Jews against Christ? But O Christian (saith he) take heed thou beest not guilty of the same fault; for he that defiles the Kings Garment, and he that tears the Kings Garment offends alike. The Jews tear it, scandalous Christians they defile the Garment of Christ, the Sins are divers, but the Reproach the same (saith he.) Now then, you see that sometimes the Members of the Solemn Assembly do bring a Reproach; They are accessary: God knows how to roll away a Reproach by a Reproach: and God will sometimes roll away sinful Reproach by a penal Reproach: And therefore he doth suffer the Solemn Assembly sometimes to lie under a Reproach.

2. What if God have some great design and work to bring to pass, which in an ordinary way he cannot

cannot bring to pass, but through the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly? Suppose that the Lord be intended for to scatter and disperse the Truth, and the Gospel; how will he do this but by scattering his people that are of the Solemn Assembly? The Church was scattered in the 8th. of the *Acts*: What then? they went up and down preaching every where; they came to *Antioch*, and a great number believed, and turned to the Lord, and *Paul* and *Barnabas* stayed there a whole year preaching, and there those that believed were first called Christians: By their scattering, Truth and the Gospel scattered.

But then, Thirdly, what if God will try his enemies and his friends, both at once? Sometimes he will try his enemies, whether they will dare to break open his House, to trample his holy City under foot: Whether they will behave themselves proudly: Sometimes he will try them: Sometimes he will try his own Children, how they will carry it in such a day, whether they will lament after God; how they will be affected for the want of the publick Assembly; God will try sometimes his own Children, and where doth God try his Children but in that thing, wherein they are much delighted? what's that? One thing have I desired of the Lord, which I will for ever desire; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord: here's their delight, here's their desire; here God will try them.

But Fourthly, What if the Lord will make the Solemn Assembly more glorious than ever it was? he hath promised to do it. To make the Place of his feet more glorious; that the light of the Moon shall be as the light of the Sun, and the light of one day as of seven days: He will make the Solemn Assembly more glorious: How so? but by bringing one

contrary out of another : when did God ever put any great life into any business, but at first he put the sentence of death upon it ? When did God ever give any great repute or honour to *Joseph*, to *David*, to *Mordai*, but first they were brought under Reproach : saith our Saviour Christ, unless the seed dies, it abides alone ; but if it die it brings forth much fruit. So with Christ, so with the Saints ; in the 26th. of *Isaiah*, as with himself it was, so it shall be with his, *Thy dead man shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise*. Bodies once dead and raised again, are the most glorious. Now God doth intend to make the Solemn Assembly more glorious than ever. No wonder therefore that he doth sometimes, (being this is his way and method) suffer the Solemn Assembly to lye under Reproach. So then, you have the first thing cleared in two particulars.

But then Secondly : Suppose the Solemn Assembly do lye under Reproach : How will the members of the Solemn Assembly take it, or be affected with it ?

Why the Members of the Solemn Assembly are of two sorts. There are false Members, and there are true Members.

Some are true Members of the Church, *If ye continue in my Word, ye are my Disciples indeed.*

Some are false Members of the Church : *They went out from us, because they were not of us.* 1 *Joh. 2. 19.* these latter when the Solemn Assembly lies under Reproach, they will not be much grieved ; but rather say, down with it, down with it even to the ground ; (with the Children of *Edam* 109 110 111 112 113 114 115 116 117 118 119 120 121 122 123 124 125 126 127 128 129 130 131 132 133 134 135 136 137 138 139 140 141 142 143 144 145 146 147 148 149 150 151 152 153 154 155 156 157 158 159 160 161 162 163 164 165 166 167 168 169 170 171 172 173 174 175 176 177 178 179 180 181 182 183 184 185 186 187 188 189 190 191 192 193 194 195 196 197 198 199 200 201 202 203 204 205 206 207 208 209 210 211 212 213 214 215 216 217 218 219 220 221 222 223 224 225 226 227 228 229 230 231 232 233 234 235 236 237 238 239 240 241 242 243 244 245 246 247 248 249 250 251 252 253 254 255 256 257 258 259 260 261 262 263 264 265 266 267 268 269 270 271 272 273 274 275 276 277 278 279 280 281 282 283 284 285 286 287 288 289 290 291 292 293 294 295 296 297 298 299 300 301 302 303 304 305 306 307 308 309 310 311 312 313 314 315 316 317 318 319 320 321 322 323 324 325 326 327 328 329 330 331 332 333 334 335 336 337 338 339 340 341 342 343 344 345 346 347 348 349 350 351 352 353 354 355 356 357 358 359 360 361 362 363 364 365 366 367 368 369 370 371 372 373 374 375 376 377 378 379 380 381 382 383 384 385 386 387 388 389 390 391 392 393 394 395 396 397 398 399 400 401 402 403 404 405 406 407 408 409 410 411 412 413 414 415 416 417 418 419 420 421 422 423 424 425 426 427 428 429 430 431 432 433 434 435 436 437 438 439 440 441 442 443 444 445 446 447 448 449 450 451 452 453 454 455 456 457 458 459 460 461 462 463 464 465 466 467 468 469 470 471 472 473 474 475 476 477 478 479 480 481 482 483 484 485 486 487 488 489 490 491 492 493 494 495 496 497 498 499 500 501 502 503 504 505 506 507 508 509 510 511 512 513 514 515 516 517 518 519 520 521 522 523 524 525 526 527 528 529 530 531 532 533 534 535 536 537 538 539 540 541 542 543 544 545 546 547 548 549 550 551 552 553 554 555 556 557 558 559 560 561 562 563 564 565 566 567 568 569 570 571 572 573 574 575 576 577 578 579 580 581 582 583 584 585 586 587 588 589 590 591 592 593 594 595 596 597 598 599 600 601 602 603 604 605 606 607 608 609 610 611 612 613 614 615 616 617 618 619 620 621 622 623 624 625 626 627 628 629 630 631 632 633 634 635 636 637 638 639 640 641 642 643 644 645 646 647 648 649 650 651 652 653 654 655 656 657 658 659 660 661 662 663 664 665 666 667 668 669 670 671 672 673 674 675 676 677 678 679 680 681 682 683 684 685 686 687 688 689 690 691 692 693 694 695 696 697 698 699 700 701 702 703 704 705 706 707 708 709 710 711 712 713 714 715 716 717 718 719 720 721 722 723 724 725 726 727 728 729 730 731 732 733 734 735 736 737 738 739 740 741 742 743 744 745 746 747 748 749 750 751 752 753 754 755 756 757 758 759 760 761 762 763 764 765 766 767 768 769 770 771 772 773 774 775 776 777 778 779 780 781 782 783 784 785 786 787 788 789 790 791 792 793 794 795 796 797 798 799 800 801 802 803 804 805 806 807 808 809 810 811 812 813 814 815 816 817 818 819 820 821 822 823 824 825 826 827 828 829 830 831 832 833 834 835 836 837 838 839 840 841 842 843 844 845 846 847 848 849 850 851 852 853 854 855 856 857 858 859 860 861 862 863 864 865 866 867 868 869 870 871 872 873 874 875 876 877 878 879 880 881 882 883 884 885 886 887 888 889 890 891 892 893 894 895 896 897 898 899 900 901 902 903 904 905 906 907 908 909 910 911 912 913 914 915 916 917 918 919 920 921 922 923 924 925 926 927 928 929 930 931 932 933 934 935 936 937 938 939 940 941 942 943 944 945 946 947 948 949 950 951 952 953 954 955 956 957 958 959 960 961 962 963 964 965 966 967 968 969 970 971 972 973 974 975 976 977 978 979 980 981 982 983 984 985 986 987 988 989 990 991 992 993 994 995 996 997 998 999 1000

But the former, that are the true Members of the Solemn Assembly, The Saints and people of God, They will be much affected ; saith the Text, there-
fore

fore I will gather them that are sorrowful for the Solemn Assembly, who are of thee, To whom the reproach of it is a burthen: These will be much affected, and very sensible of the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly, in *Numb. 9*. We read of some certain men that were defiled by a dead body, and they were mightily troubled that they were kept from the Passover from one Ordinance, *verse 6, 7*. Yet the Solemn Assembly stood: how would they have been affected if the Solemn Assembly it self had lain under Reproach, in *Psalms 42*. You see *David* is much affected when he was kept from the house of God: yet the Solemn Assembly stood. How would he have been affected if the Solemn Assembly it self had lain under Reproach. When the Solemn Assembly doth lie under Reproach, those that are the true Members of the Church and Solemn Assembly, the Saints and people of God in truth, they will be much affected and sensible thereof, and carry the Reproach up and down with them as a burthen.

You will say How, and Why?

Quest. How will the Saints and People of God be affected when the Solemn Assembly lies under Reproach?

Ans. I Answer Negatively First, They will not be so affected with the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly as to be incapable of the Teachings of God. It's said of *Israel*, that they did not hear *Moses* for anguish: so the Saints and People of God will not be affected when the Solemn Assembly lies under Reproach, for they will learn thereby.

Neither will they be affected with the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly, as to be unthankful for what they have, 'tis thy Mercy that we are not consumed: True, The Solemn Assembly lyes under Re-

proach,

proach, but it is a Mercy of Mercies we have that liberty we have.

Nor will they be so affected with the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly as if it were barely their own concernment: Not barely as their own concernment: 'Tis true, they are much more concerned in the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly than others, but they are not affected upon this account, meerly because it is their own concernment.

Quest. How then? How are the Saints and people of God affected with the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly?

Ans. First, They are affected more with this evil, than with any evil in the world: And they look upon this as their great affliction, and are afflicted more at this than at any evil; than any other evil of their own that doth befall them. You know how it was with the Daughter of *Ely, Ickabod, Ickabod*, The Ark of the Lord is taken; Her Husband was taken, and she falls in Travel, *1 Sam. 4. 21.* and being delivered, she names the Child *Ickabod*, saying the glory is departed from *Israel*, because the Ark of God was taken, and because of her Father in Law, and her Husband: and she said, the glory is departed from *Israel*, for the Ark of God is taken, she names her *Husbands* death but once, and her *Fathers* death but once; but the Ark was taken, twice, for that she was most affected. *Is there any sorrow like unto my sorrow*, saith the Church? why? the waies to *Zion* mourn and are unfrequented. Thus then the Saints and people of God will be affected when the Solemn Assembly doth lye under Reproach.

2. This affection of theirs will continue with them, and abide upon them: they will not hang down their heads for a day, and frolick it afterwards; hang down their heads for a day in a Fast, but as it

is said of *Abub*, he walked bravely, So they will walk. Saith *David* in *Psalms 42*. My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, where is thy God? When I remember these things I pour out my soul in me, so you read it; but it should be, upon me: I pour out my soul upon me, as waters poured upon the ground: For I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holy day: My tears have been my meat day and night, 'tis not for a day, and there's an end, but day and night: This affection doth continue with them, and abide upon them, where ever they go they carry it as their burthen.

3. Then also they will lay aside their Ornaments that they cannot rejoyce in their former comforts as they did before: And the Lord said unto the Children of *Israel*, that he would not go up with them; I will send an Angel before you, *Exod. 32*. and drive out the *Cananite*, and the *Amorite*, but (saith he) I will not go in the midst of thee: then the children of *Israel* stript themselves of their Ornaments; When the people heard these evil tydings, they mourned, and no man did put on his Ornaments; For the Lord said unto *Moses*, say unto the Children of *Israel*, ye are a stiffe necked people, I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee; Therefore now put off thine Ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee. And the Children of *Israel* stript themselves of their Ornaments, by the Mount *Horeb*: And *Moses* took the Tabernacle, and pitched it without the Camp, afar off from the Camp, and called it the Tabernacle of the Congregation; And it came to passe that every one which sought the Lord, went out unto the Tabernacle of the Congregation, which was without the Camp.

Camp. The presence of the Lord was removed: They were fain to go out unto the Tabernacle: The presence of God was departed, and God said, he would not go with them; and though he had promised them an Angel, yet they fall a crying and weeping: O the Presence of the Lord with us, else we have no comfort; and then they laid by their Ornaments: So that look when the Solemn Assembly lies under Reproach, then the Presence of the Lord is gon from the Solemn Assembly; and therefore the Saints and Servants of God will and must lay by their Ornaments.

4. The Saints and People of God will search into their own waies, and turn from the evil of those waies that have had a hand in bringing in this reproach upon the Solemn Assembly: They will search and turn. In vain is the sense, when there is no emendation. *Is it such a day as I have chosen, for a man to have down his head?* No, To relieve the oppressed; to take off the yokes and burthens: Reformation: But what is it a dull Reformation? No, but it is a Reformation lead on by prayer, and fasting; and it is such a prayer as is back'd with Reformation: And thus the people of God are affected under the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly.

2. But then secondly, you will say: What is there in this Reproach of the Solemn Assembly, that the Saints and people of God should be so much affected with it?

What, what not?

Only First, The Lord himself is well pleased with, and the Saints are well pleased in this sense, in the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly.

God himself is well pleased with it: *The Sacrifices of God are a broken and a contrite heart; An hard heart is* Gods

Gods curse, *Lamentations 3.* you read it thus: Give them sorrow of heart, thy curse unto them. 'Tis not sorrow of heart, for that's a blessing, but obstinacy of heart, an hard heart, so the Margent; but in the Hebrew, give them a heart with a Shield upon it, that may fense off the blow: That when any thing is spoken, they may fence it off; give them a fending heart, a hard heart; *a hard heart is Gods curse*: A tender and a soft heart bleeding over the miseries of the Church, it is Gods Sacrifice; God is well pleased.

And the Saints and people of God, they are well pleased in this sense. It is Recorded of *Nazianzen*, that knowing there would be freedom from sin in Heaven, he desired to dye: But then remembering that there would be no mourning for sin in Heaven, nor for the miseries of the Church, he desired to live: Choosing rather to mourn for sin, and the miseries of the Church, than to be freed from sin: here was a Spirit. 'Tis said of the true Griever, *he grieves, and he doth rejoyce in his grief*; A man that doth truly grieve, he doth grieve, and he doth rejoyce in his grief: So that in this sense of the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly, God himself is well pleased therewith, and the Saints are well pleased therein.

2. But Secondly, Do you ask what there is in the Reproach of this Solemn Assembly, that the Saints and People of God should be so much affected with it?

I Answer, There is a darkness falls upon the greatest Organ of Light: The greatest Organ of light is eclipsed; all eclipsed, and the greater Vessel or Organ of light is eclipsed, the more dreadful is the Eclipse: The Sun eclipsed, that

great Organ of light, it is more dreadful. The great Organ of light for the world, it is the Solemn Assembly: Now when a Reproach falls upon the Solemn Assembly, the greatest Vessel, and Organ of light is darkned, and this is dreadful to those that look upwards.

But Thirdly, Then the Name of the Lord is dishonoured: The Reproaches of them that Reproached thee have fallen upon me: And so the other way; The Reproaches of them that Reproach us, and the Solemn Assemblies, are fallen upon thee O Lord, and upon thy Name. There are three or four things that God doth much delight in, in the world; Things God his Truth, his Worship, his People, delights in. his Name. When the Solemn Assembly is under Reproach, his Truth is derided; his Worship defiled, his Children persecuted, and his Name dishonoured: Who can behold all these things and not bleed; and not be affected therewithall? That's a third.

4. Look when the Solemn Assembly doth lie under Reproach, then all the People of God, the whole Generation of the Righteous are afflicted, distressed, and as a Lamp despised before him, that is at ease: Who would not grieve to see the necks of all the people of God lye upon the block together, ready to be cut off? Pray do but mind that place in *Esther*, 'Tis said there, that when the Decree came out upon the Jews, that their necks lay all upon the block, in the third of *Esther*, *The Decree was given in Shushan the Palace, and the King and Haman sat down to drink, but the City Shushan was perplexed: The City Shushan, Why the City Shushan?* 'Tis not said of the Jews: What was the City Shushan, Jews? No, there were a hundred to one in the City, that

that were no Jews, I, but the Neighbours of the people of God were perplexed. O then, is the City *Sushan* perplexed in such a day? and shall not the Jews themselves be perplexed? shall they not be affected much with it? Then all the Saints, their necks lie upon the block. Look but into the Psalms, and you shall see that when the Temple of God is defiled, *The reproach of the house of God, and the persecution of the Saints go together*, Psal. 79. 1, 2. O God, the Heathen are come into thine Inheritance, thy Holy Temple have they defiled, they have laid Jerusalem on heaps; the dead bodies of thy Servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the Heaven, the flesh of thy Saints unto the beasts of the earth, their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem, and there was none to bury them, we are become a reproach to our Neighbours. I, these two go together, the defilement of the house of God, the reproach of the Solemn Assembly, and the persecution of the Saints likewise. Now who can see these things and not be affected?

5. The School-men say, That power which cannot be resisted, is a cause of grief. If evil be coming, and I be able to resist it, I am not much affected: but if evil comes like an armed man, and I cannot resist it, this causeth grief. Now when the Solemn Assemblie lies under Reproach, evil comes upon the People of God like an armed man: They cannot resist it, hear's grief then.

6. The School-men say, All grief doth arise from the want of the thing loved, and the loss of good: Now when the Solemn Assembly doth lie under Reproach, there good things are lost; the Saints good things: There's the presence of God in the Solemn Assem-

Assembly : There's the Chariot whereby Christ rides into the souls of sinners : There's the food of Faith : There's all good things gone, and therefore no wonder they are so affected : But

7. Look when the Solemn Assembly doth lie under Reproach, then the world is scandalized, and the world's offended. *No to the world because of offences,* 'tis an evil thing that the world should be offended. When is the world offended ? when the Solemn Assembly lies under Reproach ? aha, so would we have it: Then they laugh, saith *Paul*, who is offended, and I burn not. We say, when the sick man laughs, the Physician crys, he is distracted saith he. Why now the Saints and People of God, they are the worlds Physicians to cure them, and heal them, by their lives, and prayers, and instructions. What do they laugh ? what do they say ? Aha, so would we have it. But when the Solemn Assembly lies under Reproach, then is the world offended : Then therefore is the time for the Saints and people of God to be much affected.

8. Look when the Solemn Assembly doth lie under Reproach, then the Devil gets up again : The Devil falls by the powerful preaching of the Gospel, saith our Saviour Christ. Rejoyce not that the Devils fall down like lightning before you. What fall ? what doth our Saviour Christ speak of the Devils first fall ? no surely, but of his fall by the preaching of the Gospel. When the Gospel is powerfully preached, then the Devil falls : But when the Solemn Assembly lies under Reproach, he gets up again : And what good man would not grieve, when he sees how the Devil gets up again, especially if he have seen the falling of the Devil before ?

9. Look

9. Look when the Solemn Assembly doth lie under Reproach, then you have a certain presage of a Famine of the hearing of the word. If one could assure you, that for certain there would be a Famine of Bread, you would be much affected. Why the reproach of the Solemn Assembly is a certain presage of a Famine of the word, and the hearing of the word, a certain presage of it.

10. The more that any good man hath any hand in any great evil that is come, the more he is affected there withall. 'Tis fabled of the *Eagle*, that when the Eagle was shot, looking upon her wound, she was troubled: But when she lookt upon the Arrow, and saw the feathers of the Arrow; nay then saith she, I am kill'd, and am destroyed by some of my own kind; in regard of the feathers; and this wounded her again, and troubled her more, that she was destroyed by some of her own kind. And truly, when a good man looks upon the reproach of the Solemn Assembly, may he not see his own feathers? Yes, This reproach of the Solemn Assembly have I had a hand in. No wonder therefore that it doth grieve him, and that he is much affected.

11. When the Solemn Assembly doth lie under reproach, God is departed. *Take away God, and I am no body* saith one. A good heart will alwayes say so: *Take away God, and I am no body.* Now when the reproach lies upon the Solemn Assembly, then God is gone. God is so much departed, and so much gone, as the Solemn Assembly lies under reproach; so much we do bear the badges of Gods departure.

○ Do you then ask me, what there is in this reproach of the Solemn Assembly, that the Saints should be so much affected there withall? There are

are these two things, and judge you whether there be not cause, that all the Saints and people of God should be much affected, and carry it as a burthen upon their souls, when the Solemn Assembly lies under reproach? And thus I have done with the second thing, that *those that are of them*: Those that are the true Members of the Solemn Assembly, they will be very sensible of it: And you see the reasons of it.

But Thirdly, Suppose the Solemn Assembly do lie under reproach; and we have been, and are very sensible thereof, and carry it as a burthen: What then?

Then will the Lord turn your former sorrow into future comforts: Then will the Lord return unto you with joy: Then shall you certainly be comforted, and God will make your after-comforts, to run Parallel with your former troubles. *Blessed are those that mourn, for they shall be comforted: Those that sow in tears, they shall reap in joy.* As surely as now you go forth, carrying precious seed; the sense of this condition upon your hearts, you shall return again with your sheaves of joy with you.

But wherein lies this Parallel? and how shall our after-comforts run Parallel with our former troubles, in case we be thus sensible?

The Scripture tells you; First of all, in case that you have been scattered in the day of the reproach of the Solemn Assembly: In case you have been scattered, then the Lord will gather you, your gathering shall answer to your scattering. I will gather them that are sorrowful, gather, he will gather you under his wings, as a Hen gathers her Chickens. *O Jerusalem, &c. How often would I have gathered thy Children together, as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under*

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her wings : Gather you, as a shepherd gathers his sheep into his fold, and he will gather you into his bosom ; and therefore saith our Saviour Christ, *I was a stranger, and ye took me in.* The word is, you gathered me. *I was a stranger, and ye gathered me not.* Why ? because when the Lord gathers, then he takes us in, and receives us into his bosom : So that in case you have been scattered, then will the Lord gather you.

2. In case that you have halted in the day of the Solemn Assembly, then will the Lord heal you. Behold, saith he, *I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out.* Mark, there's a great matter in it, if that you be sensible of the reproach of the Solemn Assembly : I will save her that halteth, *halting* notes weakness. I will strengthen you in opposition to all your weakness. *Halting* notes an *uneven* course : A man that halts inclines this way, and inclines that way ; sometimes he bends to the right side, and sometimes to the left : So when men halt in matters of Religion, how long will ye halt between two Opinions, sometimes he bends this way to the truth, and sometimes that way against truth : Now in opposition to all this uneven course of yours, saith the Lord, I will heal her that halteth : Though thou hast halted in the day of the reproach of the Solemn Assembly, yet I will heal thee, and I will save thee, saith the Lord.

3. In case that you have suffered reproach in the reproach of the Solemn Assembly, saith the Lord, in the 19 ver. *I will get them praise and fame in every land, where they have been put to shame.* Have you suffered reproach in the day of the reproach of the Solemn Assembly, have you suffered reproach ? *I will get you fame and praise ;* yea I will get you fame and praise

praise in the very place where you have suffered reproach; ye in all the places where you have suffered reproach.

And saith he in the last verse, *When I turn back your Captivity before your eyes.* Sometimes a mans name is vindicated when he is dead; God vindicates him from reproach when he is dead: But saith he, *I will get you fame and praise, even before your eyes; In the very places where you have been put to shame, there will I get you fame and name, and your eyes shall see this.* So that thus then you see the Parallel; If that the Saints and people of God be sensible of the reproach of the Solemn Assembly, God will turn their former Miseries, into after Mercies, and he will cause their after Comforts to run parallel with their former trouble.

By way of Application then:

If these things be so. First, rejoyce not over us O our enemies; for though we be fallen, yet we shall rise again. Speak no more arrogantly O ye Children of man, though the righteous fall seven times, he shall rise again.

2. If this Doctrine be true, what a mighty difference is here between a godly man, and a wicked man, in reference to his dealings with God, and God's dealing with him? In reference to his dealings with God, a wicked man looks upon a Solemn Assembly with an evil eye, and it is his burthen, he crys, The burthen of the Lord, the burthen of the Lord: A good man looks upon the reproach of the Solemn Assembly as his burthen. *The Solemn Assembly is self* is a burthen to a wicked man, the reproach of it is a burthen to a good man. Well now, as for the wicked, his laughter shall be turned into mourning; as for the godly, his mourning shall be turned into comfort.

But

But thirdly, If this Doctrine be true, what abundance of comfort is here, for all you that have been sensible of the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly? It cannot be denied, but this day the Solemn Assembly lies under Reproach; then you that have carried this Reproach up and down with you as your burthen, and have been sensible of this Reproach of the Solemn Assembly, be of good comfort, the Lord will turn your present Miseries into future Mercies; the Lord will cause your after comforts, to run parallel with your present troubles.

You will say, this comfort doth relate to the future, but I have none for the present.

Yes, you know 'tis said, the Lord comforteth in all our tribulations; 'tis not said after our tribulations, but in them: There is comfort in our tribulations; Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of God: Blessed are those that mourn, they shall be comforted: and blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God: But blessed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of God: So that here's comfort for the present.

But you will say, All this comfort hangs upon a condition; This Promise doth run conditionally. Here's a great Promise of comfort indeed, but it is upon condition, being sensible of the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly, and I have not been sensible, and I am not sensible.

No, pray stay a little: Not sensible! It may be you are not sensible of your sense: As a man may be sensible of his unsensibleness, so a man may be unsensible of his sense: As a man may not believe that he doth believe; So a man may not be sensible of the sense that he hath of the cause and misery of the people of God. When a poor man comes first into the Prison

Prison, he is sensible of the smell of the Prison, afterwards he is not sensible of his sense; but he hath a sense still: So now it may be, you have been so used to be sensible of the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly; that it may be you are not sensible of your sense.

But I pray tell me, If that you have borne the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly upon your hearts before God in private? Have you not been sensible? If you have fasted and prayed in reference to the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly: Have you not been sensible? Our Saviour Christ expounds the one by the other. There came to Christ the Disciples of *John*, saying: Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft; but thy Disciples *fast* not? Jesus said unto them: Can the Children of the Bride-chamber *mourn*, &c? he expounds fasting by mourning: and if you have been more afflicted with the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly, than of any other thing, and have walked heavily under the burthen of it: Certainly you have been sensible.

But whereas you say, This Promise doth run conditionally, and this Condition you have not attained: Give me leave to say to you; Do you rightly understand a Condition? A Condition properly is that upon the account whereof a thing is done, and without which thing it cannot be done.

As for example, I sell my Commodity for Money, now upon the account you pay so much Money, I give you the commodity, and without that I do not give it: Now I pray, will you say, that *your own sense* at the highest, is that upon the account whereof God will shew mercy? or will you say that God will not shew mercy unless you have *sense*? We find that God doth return unto his people first, and after-

afterwards he saith, *then* shall ye be ashamed, and *then* shall ye loath your selves: 'tis very true, that he will shew mercy to those that have *sense* of the Solemn Assembly. But where doth he say that he will shew no mercy to those that have no sense? No where; For his love and grace is free: But if any man be sensible of the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly lo this comfort is laid up for you: Are you scattered? the Lord will gather you: have you halted in this day of the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly? God will heal your halting: Have you suffered Reproach? In the very place where you have suffered Reproach, God will give you a Name, and Fame, and Glory. I must say it, lift up your heads O ye Saints, you that hang down and are sensible of the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly.

You will say now: But what should we do that we may be more sensible then of the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly? 'Tis clear, the Solemn Assembly doth lie under Reproach, and God hath promised all this comfort to those that are sensible of it: I hope I have some sense, What shall I do that I may be more sensible of the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly, that this comfort, and this promise may come upon my soul?

First of all, get spiritual life, you must be living; A dead man is not sensible: A living man is sensible of the scratch of a Pin, a dead man is not sensible of the gash of a Sword: 'Tis life that makes one sensible: Never think to be sensible, and to be dead: Therefore go to God for Spiritual life.

2. Then strengthen your love unto God, and his Waies, and Children, and Ordinances; *Deuter. 10. 12.*

ris filia, grief is the Daughter of love: I grieve for the loss of what I love, and no further than I love. If I would grieve and be sensible of the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly, strengthen your love: Love to the Ordinances, love to the Solemn Assembly, love to God. And

3. Then take advantage from all those occasions that you meet withal, to enlarge your mourning, and your sense. When a man would leap far, he takes his rise upon a Mole-hill; that he may leap the farther. Friends, you have many rises this day, for your mourning, and for your sense, improve all those rises, as you meet with any occasion, look upon them as so many Mole-hills, look upon them as so many rises for to go the farther in your sense of the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly.

4. then observe what those evils are, those sins are, that have had a hand in bringing this Reproach upon the Solemn Assembly; and do not meddle therewithal: Take heed you do not add any of them to the heap. If a man have a burden upon his shoulder, that he cannot stand under, and you go to lay any more upon him; (saith he) I pray take heed, I have as much on me, as my back will bear: And if there be company in a Boat, that the Boat be full, and another offer to come in; O no by no means, the Boat is ready to sink already: Truly thus it is, the Boat is ready to sink already it is so full. And do you look upon the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly as your burthen; O then, take notice what it was that brought the Reproach, and take heed of that.

5. Take heed of the immoderate use of any creature

creature comfort. Friends, let me say this to you ; the more your hearts do soak into the comfort of the creatures, the less cause you will have of the Reproach of the Solemn Assemblies : The more your hearts soak into the comforts of your own house, the less sensible you will be of the Reproach of Gods House : So that take heed of the immoderate use of any creature comfort that is before you.

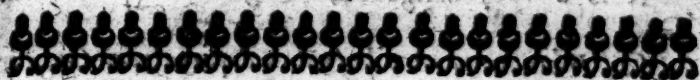
To end all,

Above all things strengthen your Faith : for although *Sense* be an enemy to *Faith*, *Faith* is a friend to *Sense* ; especially sense of sin, and sense of the Churches miseries. The more you look upon the fulness, and the freeness, and the certainty of the Promise of deliverance, the more your Faith will be strengthened. Now this promise of deliverance here, is full, is free, 'tis large, it's repeated again, and again; In the fourth of *Micah* you have the same promise, and its there repeated again and again.

Why then should you not say thus? Well through the grace of God, though I be sensible of the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly; yet I will believe for deliverance, and though I do believe for deliverance, yet I will be sensible through grace, of the Reproach of the Solemn Assembly. Do so; only let your Faith be the Mother unto this sense; therefore take this Promise, read it over, work it, chase it upon your hearts much when you are alone. I conclude reading it: Saith the Lord here, *I will gather them that are sorrowful for the Solemn Assembly, who are of thee, to whom the Reproach of it was a burthen: Behold, at that time, I will undo all that afflict thee, and I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out: And*

I will get them Praise and Fame in every Land
 where they have been put to shame: At that time
 will I bring you again, even in the time that I
 gather you; for I will make you a Name, and a
 Praise among all people of the Earth, when I turn
 back your Captivity before your eyes, saith the
 Lord.

S E R M.



SERM. VIII.

The evil of Unbelief, in departing from God.

Heb. 3. 12. Take heed Brethren, least there be in any of you an evil heart of Unbelief, in departing from the Living God.

IN these words three things are the most considerable.

A great Disease that Christians are subject to, to depart from God.

The cause of that Disease, an evil heart of unbelief.

The cure of that Disease, or the remedy against it ; and that is, watchfulness, or taking heed. Take heed least there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

The Disease is great indeed, a disease common unto the Children of men to depart from God.

And the Disease is very dangerous ; for else, why should we take heed thereof ? I shall speak something to all these, and not so much as to single out any Doctrine : But thus from the first.

It is a very dangerous thing to depart from God.

Q. When may a man be said to depart from God, or a people said to depart from God: And what is the danger of it?

A. For answer, There is a total departing from God, and a partial departing from God; every sin that we do commit is a departing from God. For what is sin, but an Avertency from the Creator, and a Conventency to the Creature?

A total departure, there is, and that is two-fold, either total in regard of the object, or total in regard of the subject.

A man doth totally depart from God *Objective*, when he doth depart from all the truths and wayes of God, and turns Heathen.

But *Subjective*, a man doth totally depart from God, when he doth with his whole heart and soul depart from the Lord, though he may keep many truths; as a man that breaks in his outward estate, he may keep some thing, and yet be broken: So spiritually, a man may break and depart from God, and yet may keep many truths. Now it is this totally departing that is here aimed at; and it is a dangerous thing, either totally or partially: But especially a dangerous thing to depart from the Lord totally.

Now that's the Question: When may a man be said to depart from God?

Look when a man doth depart from the Service and the Worship of God, then he departs from God. In *Isa. 65. 11.* But ye are they that forsake the Lord, they forget my holy mountain: When men do forget the Holy Mountain, the Worship and Service

in departing from God.

vice of God, and depart from that, then they depart from, and forsake the Lord: And

2. Look when a man doth depart from an holy Conversation wherein he hath walkt before, then he is said to depart from God, *Job 6. 14.* But he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty: *To him that is afflicted, pity should be shewed from his Friend, but he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty:* 'Tis not said, he forsakes the Almighty, but he forsakes the fear of the Almighty, which is all one: When a man doth forsake the fear of the Almighty, the good ways of God, a holy and a good Conversation wherein he hath walkt before, then he is said to depart from God: And

3. Look when a man and in time of danger and trouble, not so much trust unto the Lord, as unto an arm of flesh for safety and deliverance, then he is said to depart from God, *Jer. 17. 5.* Thus saith the Lord, *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord:* For a man in time of trouble to rest upon an arm of flesh, and not upon the Lord himself. Why, this is to depart from God in Scripture Language.

Now it is a dangerous thing so to do.

For thereby a man doth depart from his life, in departing from *The danger of departing from God.* God, he doth depart from his own life: For *God is a Living God,* saith the Text here: Take heed lest there be in any of you an evil heart of Unbelief, in departing from the *Living God:* Departing from God, then a man doth depart from his life: *Take away God and I am nobody* saith one: A true speech, take away the Living God, and where's our life?

The evil of Unbelief,

2. Thereby also a man doth depart from his own Prosperity, 2 Chron. 26. 5. 'Tis said of Uzziah, *As long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper*; Departing then from the Lord, is a departing from a mans own prosperity.

3. Thereby also in departing from God, a man doth depart from his Refuge and shelter in the time of Adversity: As he doth depart from his own prosperity, so by departing from God, A man doth depart from his shelter, and Covert, and Sanctuary in the time of adversity. You know what God hath said, *I will be a little Sanctuary unto you*: In the want of a Sanctuary, God will be a Sanctuary to his people, *Fear not their fear, nor be affraid, sanctifie the Lord of Hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread, and he shall be for a Sanctuary unto you*: A hiding place, a shelter in the time of a storm: When a man departs from God, then he departs from his Sanctuary, from his relief and shelter in the day of his adversity.

4. Thereby also a man doth depart from his own Comfort, from all his Comforts; Take away the Sun, and 'tis not all the Torches in the Land can make a day, or can give day light: God is the Father of Mercy, and the God of all Consolation; depart therefore from the Lord, and we depart from all our Consolation, we depart from all our Comfort.

5. Thereby also in departing from the Lord, a man doth depart from his own Being, and his own Mercy: Forsakes his own Mercies, and cleaves unto lying vanities. The name of God you know is I am, I am that I am: Who is All-sufficient? I am saith God: Who is gracious? I am saith God. The name of God is, *I am*, the name of the Creature

is,

is, I am not : In departing therefore from the Lord, a man doth depart from his own being : In him we live, and move, and have our being, departing from the Lord, we depart from all : Surely 'tis a very dangerous thing then to depart from God.

2. Now in the second place, The cause of this disease is Unbelief : Unbelief is the Root of Apostasie, Infidelity is the ground of Apostasie, an unbelieving heart is the cause of this departing this God.

Here are two things :

1. That an unbelieving heart, is an evil heart.

Secondly, That unbelief is the cause and root of this Apostasie, or departing from God.

As for the first, I shall clear it by several particulars ; and but name them.

An unbelieving heart is an evil heart, for it is an hard heart ; and therefore you have it in the following words, *Least any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin* : What is an hard heart ? we are generally mistaken about an hard heart ; we think ordinarily that when a mans heart is straitned in duty, then his heart is hard : No, a man may be straitned in duty, and yet his heart may be soft : But a thing is said to be hard when it dont yield : Soft when it doth yield. Touch hard wax and it yields not, touch soft wax and it yields, and takes the impression : A soft heart yields unto Gods impressions ; a hard heart yields not, but resists and contradicts : So doth an unbelieving heart : An unbelieving heart is a contradicting, resisting, an unyielding heart ; and therefore properly an unbelieving heart is a hard heart.

2. As an unbelieving heart is an hard heart, so so an unblieving heart is an unclean heart : For faith purifies

purifies the heart, and therefore where the heart is unbelieving, the heart is unpurified, and so is unclean: An unbelieving heart is an unclean heart.

3. As an unbelieving heart is an unclean heart, so it is a proud heart. You know what the Prophet *Hab.* saith, in his second Chapter, *Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him, but the just shall live by Faith*: So then, an unbelieving heart also is a proud heart.

4. As an unbelieving heart is a proud heart, so it is a froward, peevish, fretful heart: *Faith* and *fretting* are opposed, in *Psal.* 37. *Fret not thy self because of evil doers, trust in the Lord, and do good: Commit thy way unto him, and trust in him*, verse 5. *Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him, fret not thy self because of him who prospereth in his way*, ver. 7. *Faith* and *fretting* are opposed. How did the people of *Israel* murmur in the Wilderness? and why? but because of their unbelief? Froward, and fretful, and murmuring. An unbelieving heart is a fretting froward heart.

5. As it is a fretting and froward heart, so an unbelieving heart is a rash foolish heart, and will put one upon doing foolish things. It's rash, faith makes not haste; but unbelief makes haste, *I said in my haste I am cast out of thy sight*: That's unbelief, I said in my haste, all men are Lyars, that's unbelief: What a foolish thing it was for *David* to scrabble on the door, and let fall his spittle, and fain himself mad? It was his unbelief that did it: An unbelieving heart, is a rash, suddain, and a foolish heart.

6. As it is a rash and a foolish heart, so it is a doubtful heart.

doubting, wavering, staggering heart: It's said of *Abraham*, that he staggered not through unbelief: It seems then, that as Drunkenness will make a man stagger and reel too and fro, so unbelief will make a man stagger and reel too and fro: A doubting, wavering, unsettl'd, staggering heart, is an unbelieving heart.

7. As it is a doubting, staggering heart, so it is an undutiful, and an unserviceable heart: For it is *Faith* that is the great performer of Duties. What is duty, but faith Incarnate? what are *works*, but faith Incarnate? Faith is a friend to prayer, and prayer is a friend to faith. You may see how they are twisted together, and one walks by another. In the third Psalm, *David* being in very great distress, he believes, ver. 3. *But thou O Lord art a shield for me, my glory, and the lifter up of mine head:* Why then he prays, ver. 4. *I cryed unto the Lord with my voice:* Then he believes, ver. 5. *I laid me down and slept,* ver. 6. *I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people that have set themselves against me round about:* Then he prays at the 7 ver. *Arise O Lord, save me O my God:* He prays, and he believes, and he believes, & he prays. Prayer is a friend to faith, and faith is a friend to prayer: But an unbelieving heart, is an undutiful heart, an unserviceable heart, it is an unpraying heart.

8. As an unbelieving heart is an undutiful heart, and an unserviceable heart: So it is a sad, and a discouraged heart. *Why art thou cast down O my soul? and why art thou so disquieted within me? Hope, wait, trust in the Lord;* And that's the way to take off discouragements: But a heart full of unbelief, is a heart full of discouragement.

9. As it is a sad and disconsolate heart, so an unbelieving

believing heart is a dishonouring heart : By Faith we honour the power of God, the grace of God, the All-sufficiency of God : *He that believeth not, makes God a Lyar*, saith the Apostle, That God is not faithful : Faith honours the faithfulness of God, but he that believeth not makes God a Lyar : 'Tis a God dishonouring sin.

10. And to say no more in it but this : As it is a God dishonouring sin, so an unbelieving heart is the heart that God will punish with the most severity : We may see how the Lord punished it in his own people, when they were in the Wilderness, and they sinned through unbelief, God kept them out of the Land of Promise ; and why ? *Heb. 3. 19. So we see that they could not enter in, because of unbelief* : This was in their first time ; but now in their last time, they were broken off. And how came they to be broken off in Christ's time, *Rom. 11. 20. Well, because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith* : Because of unbelief they were kept out of Canaan, because of unbelief they were broken off in Christ's time : So that an unbelieving heart, and an unbelieving soul, is such an heart, and such a soul, as God will punish with the most severity ; *He that believeth not is condemned already* : An unbelieving heart is an evil heart.

But now in the second place, This unbelieving heart or infidelity, is the ground of Apostasie, for thereby we depart from God : Infidelity is the root of Apostasie ; for as by faith we are united to God, do draw near to God, and are united to him : So by our unbelief we depart from God. Faith (you know) is the uniting grace ; and so on the contrary, by unbelief we depart from God : But this will appear if you consider what those things are that

that make men depart from God.

They are the good things, and the evil things of this life.

The good things of this life do flatter men from God.

The evil things of this life, scare men from God. Now Faith will preserve from both.

If a man be tempted with the good things of this life: Yet if he have Faith, he will not depart from God, for by Faith we live upon God in the use of the good things.

And if a man be tempted to depart from God by the evil things of this life, yet if he have but Faith, he will not depart from God; for by Faith we live upon God, and live above losses, and above crosses; so that Faith doth preserve us from both: and therefore unbelief is the root and ground of all our Apostasie, or declining from God: And we know how it was with the three Children, what it was that kept them in that evil day; there was the Musick on the one hand, and the fiery Furnace on the other; but between both, they were kept and preserved, for they believed: It was their Faith kept them from departing.

But further, If that Unbelief be a Mother Sin, a Parent Sin, a breeding Sin, the root and cause of other sins: Why then Unbelief must needs be the root, and ground, and cause of Apostacy. Why now, what is the cause of all our sins but our unbelief? People do not think so: What's the reason that men are so covetous and worldly, but because of their unbelief? What's the reason when people are in trouble that they use indirect means to get out of trouble, but because of their unbelief? What's the Reason that a Servant or a Child will tell lies?

Because

Because of Unbelief. Unbelief is the Mother sin; the Parent sin, the Breeding sin; and therefore Unbelief is the cause of departing and going off from God.

And if so, why should we not all then take heed of an evil heart of unbelief? That's the Remedy that is here prescribed for the cure of this disease. Take heed Brethren, take heed least there be in any of you an evil heart of Unbelief.

Take heed:

What should we take heed of?

Take heed of departing from God, and take heed of unbelief, and of an evil heart of unbelief; whereby we depart from God.

Take heed of departing from God. For as we have heard already, it is a very dangerous thing to depart from God. Let me add this:

If we depart from God, who will receive us? If a Proclamation be out against a man as a Traitor, who durst receive him? And if a man do depart from the Lord, what creature dare receive him? In *2 Joh.* speaking of some that departed from the Lord; Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the Doctrine of Christ; if there come any into you, and bring not this Doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: The Kings Proclamation is out against him, take heed how you receive him. Here's a command sent from the Lord to take heed how you receive such an one; I say, if we depart from God, who will receive us?

And if you depart from God, you will hardly ever return unto him again: you know the place, it is impossible we should be renewed by Repentance. Faith is but once delivered to the Saints: If the leaves be off in the Winter, the tree will grow again; but if

if it be pluck't up by the roots, it will grow no more: *Twice dead* saith the Apostle: dead by the Law; but if a man depart from God under the Gospel, he is twice dead: now a man that's twice dead, certainly he will never recover; twice dead, How twice dead? Not that a man was twice alive. A man is hanged, and so is dead; after he is hanged he is quartered, here's a second death; he is twice dead, not that he had a life between these two deaths, between his hanging and his quartering, but he is twice dead: So a man that departs from God under the Gospel, he is twice dead: He was alive once in the state of Innocency, but he lost it, and now he is dead by the Gospel, and cut asunder by the Gospel, he is twice dead, and will hardly ever return to God again: A man that lives under the Gospel, and departs from God, a thousand to one, if ever he return to God again.

And if we do depart from God, God will depart from us: God is with us while we are with him, but if we forsake the Lord, he will forsake us; if we depart from God, God will depart from us: God comes first to us, but we go first from him; God doth not leave any, but those that leave him first; He comes to us before we come to him, but if we depart from him, he will depart from us: and if God go, the Devil comes; the Lord rejected *Saul*, and an evil Spirit came presently upon him: therefore who would not take heed of departing from God? But

Secondly, As we are to take heed of departing from God, so we are to take heed of Unbelief, and of an unbelieving heart, whereby we depart from God; for the sin of unbelief, and an unbelieving heart is very cunning and makes a deceitful heart:

There-

Therefore saith the Apostle in the words following : *least ye be hardened, through the deceitfulness of sin.* It hath very many pretences and fair colours. When they were invited by the Gospel, what excuses had they, all from unbelief? I have married a Wife, and I cannot come; and I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go see it, I pray thee, have me excused; And I have bought five yoke of Oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee have me excused. No, no, I have unbelief in my heart, and I cannot come; Unbelief made all these Excuses, 'tis a cunning heart, a deceiving sin, the sin of unbelief.

And indeed it is such a sin, as hardens insensibly, that we cannot perceive: You can see the tree, the body of the tree, and the bark of the tree, and the boughs of the tree, and the leaves of the tree, but you cannot see the root of the tree. *Unbelief* is a root sin, and that's least perceived: Now when one hath to deal with a deceitful enemy, that is least perceived, had he not need take heed? Take heed of departing from God, through an evil heart of unbelief.

Quest. The question then is, What shall we do? These are declining and departing times, wherein many do and will depart from God, (make account on't) what shall we do that we may not depart from God through unbelief? What shall we do, that we may take heed of an unbelieving heart, that we may take heed of departing from God? (I put them together into one question) Now I shall give several directions here, and so wind up.

I. If you would not depart from God through unbelief, in declining and departing times, be sure that you keep close unto the word of God, unto his appoint-

appointments; and take heed how you meddle with any appointments that are like to his: For the more you depart from the word, the more you depart from God; and the more you meddle with appointments that are like to Gods, the more you depart from the word. Look into *Exod. 30.* and see what a Commandment there is, not to meddle with any thing that's like to Gods appointments, at the 23 ver. There's direction concerning the holy ointment, *Take thou also unto thee principal spices, of pure myrrh five hundred shekels, and of sweet Cinamon half so much, even two hundred and fifty shekels, and of sweet Calamus two hundred and fifty shekels, and of Cassia five hundred shekels, after the shekel of the Sanctuary, and of Oil Olive an hin: Then at the 25 ver. Thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment, an ointment compound after the art of the Apothecary: it shall be an holy anointing oil: Well at the 33 ver. Whosoever compoundeth any like it, or whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger, shall even be cut off from his people: You shall make none like it. At the 34 ver. You have directions for the making of an holy perfume, The Lord said unto Moses, *Take unto thee sweet spices, Stacte, and Onycha, and Galbanum: these sweet spices with pure frankincense, of each shall there be a like weight: And thou shalt make it a Perfume, a Confection after the Art of the Apothecary, tempered together pure and holy: But then at the 38 ver. Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from his people: A dangerous thing it is to meddle with the appointments in the Worship and Service of God, that are like to Gods appointments: for any man (like an Apothecary and a Confectioner) in the Worship and Service of God; To make appointments in Gods**

Worship like unto the appointments of God ; it's a dangerous thing, he shall be cut off from his people : Therefore if you would not depart from God through unbelief, keep close to the word, and the appointments thereof ; and take heed of meddling with any appointments that are like thereto.

2. If you would not depart from God through unbelief, take heed that you do not suffer any thing to come between your heart and Gods Commandment or Promise : We all fell in *Adam* through unbelief : How came that about ? Why, the Devil got between *Adams* heart and the Commandment : *Adam* did not keep the Commandment close, there was something (a Devils promise) that got between his heart and Gods Commandment ; and so departed from God. Take heed therefore, and be sure that nothing come between your heart and Gods Commandment.

3. If you would not depart from God, the Living God through unbelief : Take heed of venturing upon any sin because it's small, yielding to any Error because 'tis little, leaving any truth because it is but little or small. There are some passage truths (as I may call them) in time of War when one Army is against another, you shall see how earnestly they will contend for a little passage, a little spot of ground ; ask them the reason, O that's a passage : So there are some truths that are but small in themselves, and they are passage truths : and if you would not depart from God, and the great truths ; look to passage truths, look to keep your passages.

4. If you would not depart from God, the Living

ving God through unbelief; Be sure that you lay all your work in sincerity; for the ground that had not Root in it self, falls away. Take this for a certain Rule. *He that begins in Hypocrisie, will end in Apostacy.* Here are some it may be (though but few of us) that are beginning, and laying the foundation: Look to your foundation, that it be laid well in sincerity; for if your foundation be laid in hypocrisie, you will end in Apostacy.

5. If you would not depart from the Lord through an unbelieving heart, take heed of strangeness with God, want of Communion in private: Enmity begins in strangeness among men; First, people grow strange, and then they come to hate one another, and to be enemies to one another: Enmity begins with strangeness, and truly so it is with God; First strangeness, and then Enemies: If you would not depart from God, the Living God; O take heed of strangeness with God, maintain your private Communion.

6. Take heed of taking offence, and of being offended at any of the good wayes of God, or any of the people of God: 'Twas Dr. Prestons usual saying, I never knew any one decline, or fall away; But first he took offence at some good man, and then he took offence at more good men, and then he took offence at the wayes of God themselves: And you know it's laid of the Disciples, they were offended and went back: And of the false ground, *By and by he is offended*; he doth not say, *By and by they fall away*: Why? Because usually falling away and departing begins at being offended: Therefore would you not depart from the Living God, then take heed you take no offence at the good wayes of God, or the people of God.

7. Take heed of walking alone: For you see what follows in the Text, saith he, Take heed Brethren, least there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the Living God, *But exhort one another daily*: So that the onely way to be kept from departing from the Living God, is to be exhorting one another. *Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another*: In evil days exhort one another daily, in declining times take heed of walking alone.

8. Take heed of Remisseness in duty: Remisseness in duty, will cause omission of duty; omission of duty, will cause Commission of evil; and Commission of evil will cause a departing from God: I use to say, the slumber of grace, is a preparation to sin; and those that slumber in times of enjoyments, they will fall in suffering times (it's likely) you know how it was with the Disciples that slumbered and slept at the Mount of Transfiguration, afterwards they slept also in suffering time: Well therefore, if you would not depart from God, the Living God through unbelief; Take heed of the slumbers of grace, take heed of remissness in any duty, least remissness cause omission, omission commission, and commission departing from God.

9. Take heed that you do not stand poring upon your Temptations, whatsoever your Temptations be: When the Children of Israel were stung by the Serpents in the Wilderness, they did not stand poring upon the Arm that was stung, and crying out, O my Arm, O how it is swell'd! but they lookt up upon the Brazen Serpent: If they had lookt upon their Arm, and stood poring upon that, they had never been Cur'd: So now, if in case we be tempted, the way is, not to stand poring upon the

the temptation, but to look off unto Christ: If therefore you would not depart from God in the time of Temptation, take heed of poring upon the Temptation, look off from that upon the brazen Serpent. And

10. Set the Lord alwaies before your eyes, his All-sufficiency, his Fulness, his Grace, his Goodness: I have set the Lord alwaies before me, at my right-hand (saith *David*) and therefore I shall not fall: So do you.

11. Possess your hearts much with the fear of God; Fear is the preserver of innocency: *Plenarie my fear into your hearts* saith God, *That you shall not depart from me*: If then you would not depart from God, labour to possesse your souls with the fear of God.

12. Take heed how you consult with Flesh and Blood in the things of God. If *Paul* had consulted with Flesh and Blood, he had never believed: And if in the things of God we consult with Flesh and Blood, we are sure to depart from God, the living God.

13. Put your selves often unto this disjunction. Come O my soul, either there is enough in God alone, or there is not: If there be not enough in God alone, how do they live in Heaven? They have no meat, no drink, no clothes, no gold nor silver: As the Martyr said, I am going to that Country where your gold and silver will not go, (when they offered him gold and silver) Alas, our gold and silver doth not go there; As leather money will not go here where gold and silver goes: So our gold and silver will not go there: if there be not enough in God alone, how do you think they live in Heaven? Surely they live upon God. Therefore

there is enough in God: Well, if there be enough in God alone, O my Soul, Why should I depart from God? All departure doth signifie an insufficiency. I leave this house, and go to another, because this house is not sufficient. When I am sick I send to my neighbour for Beer, why? because my Beer don't like me. The Bee leaves one flower, and goes to another, because it doth not find enough in that flower: all departing notes an insufficiency. If I depart from God, it notes an insufficiency in God: Is it not because there is no God in *Israel*, that ye are gone down to *Baal-zephon*? Well, either there is enough in God alone, O my soul, or there is not: If there be not enough in God alone, then how do they live in Heaven? If there be enough in God alone, then why should I depart from God through unbelief? Thus put your selves upon this Dilemma, and it will be a means to keep you from departing from God through your unbelief.

14. If you would not depart from God, the living God through unbelief, Then take heed of worldliness: Take heed of covetousness, and of worldliness: We cannot serve two Masters, God, and Mammon, you must cleave to the one, and forsake the other: *Demas* hath forsaken me, and imbrac'd this present world. A worldly covetous heart will depart from God, and therefore take heed of covetousness, worldliness: Seek not great things for your selves: Seek ye great things in these times? Seek them not; 'Tis a great matter to have ones life for a prey in evil times.

15. If you would not depart from God, the living God through unbelief, then take heed of mis-belief; all unbelief is grounded upon a mis-belief: We don't believe because we mis-believe;
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we see it in *Adam*, he was guilty of unbelief, how? Why he believed the Devil, *You shall be like God*, saith he, and by his mis-believing he came into unbelief; His unbelief was grounded upon a mis-belief. God draws by Promises, and the Devil tempts by Promises. Why when the Devil tempts by Promises, if we believe his Promises, we shall soon be guilty of unbelief, in regard of Gods Promises; and therefore if we would not depart from God, the living God, through unbelief, take heed of mis-believing.

16. If you would not depart from God through unbelief, then look to your Judgement in reference to your Conversation, and look to your Conversation in reference to your Judgement: Look to your Life in reference to your Opinion, look to your Opinion in reference to your Life. Faith and a good Opinion, doth preserve a good Life, and a good Life doth preserve Faith and a good Opinion: Faith lyes in the bosom of a good Conversation; Faith is best preserved by a good Conversation, and a good Conversation is best preserved by Faith: Sometime men do depart from God, and their departure begins above in the Judgement, and like Rheum it falls down upon the Lungs, it falls down upon the Conversation; Sometimes the departing begins below in the Conversation, and steams up into the Judgement: as some things that are unfavoury in the Stomach, they steam up into the head. Sometimes the departure from God begins above, and works downward into the Conversation; Sometimes it begins below in the Conversation, and works upwards into the Judgement: Therefore look to your Judgements in reference to your Conversation, and look to your Conversation in reference to your Judgement: Look to your Faith

in reference to your Life, and look to your Life, in reference to your Faith.

17. If you would not depart from God, the living God, through unbelief, Then take heed how you run with the times: Good friends, there is the truth of the times, and there is the error of the times: There is the grace of the times, and there is the sin of the times, seldom that the generality of people hit it, they seldom hit the truth of the times, seldom hit the grace of the times; I say, the generality of people seldom hit it, they are like the dead Fish that swims down the water, the living Fish swims against the Tide; and so the living Christian swims against the tide of the Times: Take heed, if you would not depart from the living God through unbelief; take heed how you fall with the times; for I say, seldom do the generality of people hit the truth, or the grace of the times.

18. Know that it is the greatest honour (possess your souls on't) that may be, to wait upon the Lord, and the greatest dishonour to depart from God through unbelief: Thereby a man proclaims his own folly; thereby he doth put himself out of Gods protection; thereby he casts dirt and reproach in the very face of God: Is it not because there is no God in *Israel*, that ye go down to *Baal-zebub* the God of *Ekyon*? God will cast dirt and reproach in their faces; that cast dirt and reproach in his face: 'Tis the greatest honour to wait upon the Lord; 'Tis the greatest dishonour to depart from God.

19. Be very sensible of your own unbelieving heart, and of all your former departings from God: The best way to keep from new sins, is to be very sensible of old sins; he that is very sensible of his former sins, shall through the grace of God be kept from

from new sins : Have you departed from the Lord, be sensible of your departings from God, be sensible of your own unbelieving heart : There is many that go up and down, and are never sensible of their own unbelieving hearts, twenty, thirty, forty years they have lived, and yet not sensible of their unbelieving heart, though it's the greatest Evil : Well, if you be sensible of your unbelief, and former departings from God, then you shall be kept from departing from the Lord through unbelief.

20. Lastly, If you would not depart from God, the Living God, through an evil heart of unbelief : Be not too confident of your own strength in standing, but commit your self, and your cause, and your way, and your heart unto the Lord : The best Swimmers are the soonest drown'd : Why ? because they are the most confident, and the most confident people do the soonest fall and depart from the Lord. But our strength is to commit our selves unto God, *Commit thy way unto the Lord*, saith he; and the Apostle in evil times, suffering times, calls upon us to do this, to commit our selves into the hand of God, as into the hands of a faithful Creator: Are the times declining; and do many depart from the Lord ? take heed, be not too confident, he that standeth, standeth by Faith; be not too confident of your own standing, but commit your way, your souls, and your all unto God: He is best kept that the eternal God keeps; and if you commit your selves unto him, and his keeping, he will certainly keep you. And thus have I given you these twenty directions, that so you may not through an evil heart of unbelief be drawn to depart from the Living God.



SERM. IX.

Seasonable Truths for these Evil Times.

Luke 17. 32. *Remember Loss Wife.*

IN this Chapter our Lord and Saviour Christ tells us, how it shall be in the latter day, immediately before his second, or his last coming: which he declares by two Similitudes or Comparisons.

The first comparison is drawn from the days of *Noah*: wherein he observes their *security*, and their punishment.

Security: As it was in the days of *Noah*, so shall it be also in the days of the son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married Wives, they were given in Marriage, *ver. 26. 27.*

The *Punishment*: And the flood came and destroyed them all.

The second Comparison is drawn from the days and times of *Lot*, where you have their *Security*, and their Punishment, *ver. 18.* Likewise also, as it was in the days of *Lot*: They did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded.

The punishment, *ver. 29.* But the same day that

Lot

Lot went out of *Sodom*, it Rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.

The Rendition at the 30 ver. Even thus shall it be in the day when the son of man is revealed.

Whereupon he dehorts them from the world, and the care thereof, ver. 31. In that day, he which shall be upon the house top, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away; and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.

Which he presseth by divers Arguments,

The first is drawn from the example of *Lot's Wife*, who for her looking back, was turned into a Pillar of Salt.

The second Argument is drawn from the contrary good, *Whosoever* (saith he) *shall lose his life, shall preserve it*, v. 33.

The third is drawn from the separation that Christ hath made between the nearest Interest and Relations at that day, ver. 34. *In that night there shall be two men in one bed, the one shall be taken, and the other left; two women shall be grinding together, the one shall be taken and the other left; two men shall be in the field, the one shall be taken and the other left.*

I am now to deal with this first Argument, drawn from the example of *Lot's Wife*, who for her looking back to a worldly interest, was turned into a Pillar of Salt.

Remember *Lot's Wife*, and remember her at such a time, and remember her upon such an account: Christ would have us remember *Lot's Wife*.

There is a special time when *Lot's Wife* is to be remembered by us,

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We are not only to read the Story of *Lot's Wife*, we may forget that; but we are frequently to consider, and call it unto mind: A time there is and a special time, when *Lot's Wife* is to be remembered by us?

For the clearing and prosecuting hereof:

First, We will inquire, *what* of *Lot's Wife* is to be remembered by us?

Secondly, *Why* *Lot's Wife* is to be remembered by us?

Thirdly, *How* *Lot's Wife* is to be remembered by us?

Fourthly, What is the special time wherein *Lot's Wife* is to be remembered by us? And

Fifthly, How we should so remember *Lot's Wife*, as we may gain thereby?

Sixthly, And what we should do, that we may so profitably remember *Lot's Wife*?

1. As for the first, If it be said, what of *Lot's Wife* is to be remembered by us.

I answer, her Sin, and her Punishment.

She was turned into a Pillar of Salt, she was stricken with a sore Judgment: A mortal deadly stroke: she was not stricken as *Miriam*, with a Leprosie; but with a mortal deadly stroke, she was stricken with Death.

2. As she was stricken with a mortal deadly stroke, so with a suddain stroke: She had no time given her to repent. It is a great mercy to die standing, to die exercising of grace: but to be stricken with death in the very height of ones sin, in the very act of ones sin, and to have no time given one to repent: This is a great judgment, and this befell her.

3. As it was a suddain stroke, so it was an immediate

mediate stroke : From the hand of God immediately. Immediate mercies are the sweetest mercies, and immediate judgments are the sowerest judgments. Thus she was stricken by the hand of God immediately.

4. As she was stricken with an immediate stroke, an immediate hand of God : So this stroke, it was an exemplary stroke ; for by it she was hanged up in chains as it were, and Gibbited for all ages to take heed of : To take heed of looking back , declining, and backsliding.

And she was stricken into a Pillar of Salt.

And if you ask, why into a Pillar of Salt ?

Why Salt ? saith one, that by her example she might season others ; that by her example all of us might be warned to take heed of looking back to any worldly interest.

But I think also by her looking back, she in some measure complied, and comported with the men of *Sodom*, as they were smitten with brimstone, fire, and Salt, *Deut. 29. 23.* And the whole Land thereof became Brimstone and Salt : So she complying with them, and returning in her heart and affections to them, partaking with them in their sin, doth partake with them also in their judgment, and so was turned into Salt.

And into a *Pillar* of Salt, that's durable, and of continuance : As the everlasting Covenant is called a Pillar of Salt, so her body (for I speak not of her soul, neither doth the Scripture speak any thing concerning that) being turned into a material Pillar of Salt for the longer continuance, that she might be an everlasting Monument and warning to all Generations to take heed of looking back, declining, and backsliding : And thus she was turned in-

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to a Pillar of Salt: That's her Punishment.

As for her sin that did bring her into this condition, it was exceeding great and hainous, for there was much disobedience in it, being directly contrary unto the expresse Commandement of God by the Angel. In *Gen. 19.* *The Angels* said when they had brought them forth abroad, *Escape for thy life, look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the Plain; escape to the Mountain lest thou be consumed.* Here was an expresse Commandment that they should not look back. It seemed to be no great matter for *Adam* to eat an Apple, a forbidden Apple; but being directly contrary to Gods expresse Commandement, there was much disobedience in it: And so though it seem'd no great matter to look back, yet being directly contrary to Gods expresse Commandement There was much disobedience in it.

Again, There might be much incredulity and unbelief in this thing, for she might doubt whether God would fulfil his word in destroying *Sodom* (as God had said) and so might look back to see whether the Word of the Lord were fulfilled, or no.

But besides, There might be, and there was a great deal of carnal affection in looking back unto a worldly interest there, upon which account our Saviour Christ brings it in, in this chapter, and cautions men upon that.

Yea there was in effect an Apostacy, a Typical Apostacy, upon which account our Saviour Christ speaks on't, and saith he, he that puts his hand to the Plow, and looks back: an Apostacy there was in it. Now this Apostacy of hers was aggravated by many circumstances.

First, by the goodness of her Relation: The more gracious a man's Relations are, if he do decline

cline, the greater is his sin, if he do decline: Now she was the Wife of a gracious holy man, and therefore for her to decline from such a Relation, it was exceeding wicked.

2. And besides, As she did look back under such a Relation, so she was not tempted thereunto: The less temptation to any sin, the greater the sin: Those that are tempted to sin, excuse themselves; The woman thou gavest me, she gave me to eat: But now *Lot's* Wife could not say thus; I was tempted by *Lot*, or by any other; No, she was not over-born by any temptation from without, and therefore her sin was the greater.

3. She sinned in good company: 'Tis an evil thing to sin in any company; but the better the company is that I sin in, the worse is my sin: She had the company of her husband; she had the conduct of Angels: now upon this ground she sinned.

4. She sinned in the face of Justice: 'Tis an evil thing for a Thief to sin at any time, but to cut a mans purse before the Judge, while he is upon the Bench doing Justice, this is worse. God was now doing Justice upon *Sodom*, and for *Lot's* Wife to sin in the face of Justice doing, it made her sin exceeding great.

5. And yet farther, To say no more in it, But that she sinned also in the face of great deliverance; God had now brought her out, Husband, Children, and self, and delivered them with an high hand: To sin in the face of a deliverance wrought with an high hand, is to sin with an high hand: Such was her deliverance, wrought with an high hand, and therefore for her to sin thus, was exceeding evil, and very sinful. And thus you see what that is of
Lot's

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Lot's Wife that is to be remembered by us, namely, her sin and her punishment.

2. But then Secondly, Why is Lot's Wife to be remembered by us.

She is to be remembered by us, because that she is Recorded, and her Example is recorded for that end and purpose: She is hung up, and Gibbeted (as it were) for all that go by and read the Scripture to Remember.

Again, If that whatsoever is written in the Old Testament, is written for our instruction for our admonition, and Judgements there recorded for our Caution and Warning: Then good Reason that she and her Example should be remembered, Rom. 15. 4. *For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, and in 1 Cor. 10. 5. speaking of the sins of the Israelites, With many of them God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the Wilderness. Now these things were our Examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye Idolaters as were some of them, as it is written, the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play: Neither let us commit Fornication as some of them committed, and fell in one day, three and twenty thousand: Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of Serpents: Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the Destroyer. Now at the 11th. verse, All these things hapned unto them, for our ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.*

Further, We are to remember Lot's Wife, and she is to be remembered by us, that we fall not into the same condemnation: Read the History, least thou

ment of God; least thou thy self beeſt made the Judgement of God: The only way to be kept from afflictions our ſelves, is to gain by other mens afflictions: How ſhould we gain by ſuch afflictions as theſe, if we ſhould not remember them?

Again, If you look into Scripture, you ſhall find, that of all the Judgments that are Recorded in Scripture, there is none ſo frequently mentioned and repeated, as the Judgment of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, in the 19 *Gen.* once in the 20 *Jer.* again, and 49th. again, the 11 of *Hof.* again, the 4 *Amos* again, the 17 *Luke* again, the Epistle of *Jude* again: So then look into Scripture, and you ſhall find there is no Judgment ſo often repeated as this Judgment upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*: And why? That it may be obſerved in all the circumſtances thereof.

And to ſay no more in it but thus: There is a *Sodom* that is ſtill to be deſtroyed, in the 11 *Rev.* You find that *Rome* in the Latitude thereof is called *Sodom*: Their dead bodies ſhall lie in the ſtreet of the great City, which ſpiritually is called *Sodom* and *Egypt*: This *Sodom* is to be deſtroyed with fire, in the 18 *Rev.* She ſhall be utterly burnt with fire, ver. 8. And as *Lot* was commanded to come out of *Sodom*, ſo the people of God are commanded, *Come out of her my people.*

And as *Lot's* Wife by looking back did partake with them in their ſin, and ſo partake in their Plagues: So ſaith the Lord, Come out of her my people, that you be not partaker of her ſin, and that ye receive not of her Plagues: So then, there is a *Sodom* ſtill which is to be deſtroyed, which we are to come out of; ſpiritual *Sodom*; and therefore even this of *Lot's* Wife coming out is diligently to be conſidered, and to be remembered by us, that

we may know how to come out well : And thus we see the Reasons why *Lot's Wife* is to be remembered by us.

But Thirdly, How is *Lot's Wife* to be remembered by us?

1. She is to be remembered by us in a way of reflection, again and again to mind the story and example of *Lot's Wife* : You may oftentimes read the story, and may have forgot the same, but as the clean beast was to chew the Cud, which in the *Hebrew* is a bringing of the Meat into the mouth again : So you may have oftentimes eaten up this story of *Lot's Wife*, but you are to chew the Cud, and bring it into your Memory again, to remember it in a way of reflection.

2. In a way of meditation, I remember all thy marvellous works, and meditate thereon saith *David* : Remembrance without meditation will do little good, it must be remembrance with meditation : And

3. As it must be with Meditation, so with an holy Fear, and Reverence, and Adoration. I have read of a Heathen, that when he came by the Gallows, he would alwayes put off his Hat and bow, and say, God save Justice : And so now, when we come by this Gibbet, we should not come by, but bow with Fear, and Reverence, and Adoration, adoring the Justice and the Sovereignty of God in his proceedings. We are to remember *Lot's Wife* in a way of Fear, and Reverence, and Adoration.

4. We are to remember *Lot's Wife* in a way of Caution, so as to take heed by her : Remember how she looked back, and take heed that we do not look back : And thus we are to remember *Lot's Wife*.

But then Fourthly, What and when is the special time

time that *Lot's Wife* is to be remembered by us?

It is good to remember her frequently: But we are in a special manner to remember *Lot's Wife* in the time of declining, in declining times remember her that you do not decline. Thus our Saviour Christ brings her in for to be remembered by us, that we do not look back, as she looked back.

2. We are to remember her in times of security, of great security: As in the days of *Noah*, saith Christ, they were in great security: They ate, and drank, &c. And as in the *Dayes of Lot*, they ate, and drank, they married, they were in great security: Now saith our Saviour, *So shall it be, but remember Lot's Wife*: So that in times of great security, *Lot's Wife* is to be remembered by us.

3. She is to be remembered by us also, In time when God doth call upon his people by his dispensations to go out of *Sodom*, and make no delay: For so our Saviour also presses it to you, *Let not him that is on the house top go down, &c.* But remember *Lot's Wife*, God would have no delay then: So when God calls upon a people to come out of *Sodom*, make no delay, but remember *Lot's Wife*: Thus we see what the time is.

But fifthly and lastly, What good shall we get by remembering *Lot's Wife*? Is there any good to be gotten by remembering *Lot's Wife*?

Yes, much every way: Something in a way of Instruction, something in a way of Caution.

First, By way of instruction: I shall lay before you ten or eleven instructions that we may gain hereby.

First, If this story of *Lot's Wife* be true, and do live in our Memory, then why should not we stand and admire, and say, Lord, how unsearchable are

thy Judgments, and thy way's, past finding out. Here are four, and but four that came out of *Sodom*, and yet one of the four were destroyed: God may deliver our Family in the time of common Calamity, and yet some of our house may suffer. God in the midst of Judgment doth remember mercy: In the midst of Mercy he Remembers Judgment. In the midst of Judgment upon *Sodom*, he remembred mercy for *Lot*, and for his Family: In the midst of mercy upon *Lot*, and upon his Family, he remembred Judgment upon *Lot's* Wife. The same thing may be done by one in a way of Faith, and he may live, and done by another in a way of unbelief, and he may die. *Abraham* looked upon *Sodom* when *Sodom* was a burning. *Abraham* got up early in the morning, at the 27 ver. to the place, where he stood before the Lord, and he looked toward *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, and toward all the Land of the Plain, and beheld, and lo, the smoke of the Country went up, as the smoke of a Furnace: *Abraham* beheld, and looked upon it in a way of believing and lived: *Lot's* Wife looks back in a way of unbelief, and she dies. The same thing may be done by one in a way of Faith, and live, and by another in a way of unbelief and die. But literally here, two shall be in one bed, the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left; two shall be in the field, the one shall be taken, and the other left: Two in a bed, *Lot* and his Wife, one taken, and the other left: Two in a field, they were going both out of *Sodom*, one taken, and the other left; Lord how unsearchable are thy Judgments, and thy wayes past finding out.

2. If this story of *Lot's* Wife be true, and do live in our Memory, then here we may learn by way

way of Instruction, and see how far a Man or Woman may go in Religion, and yet come short at the last: *Lor's Wife* went far, she was a professor of the first and the highest form, she had lived a long while in *Abraham's Family*, she had walked with her Husband *Lor*, and injoyed his prayers many years; she stood out against the wickedness of *Sodom* while she was there; she was in some measure obedient unto the voice of the Angel in going out of *Sodom*: and (as some observe) she was a Professor of seventy years growth, and yet she miscarried: How far may Men and Women go in Religion, and yet miscarry at the last?

3. If this story of *Lor's Wife* be true, and do live in our memory; Then you may learn, and see by way of Instruction; That the best Relations will not secure from the hand of God if we continue evil: She was the nearest Relation to a Holy Righteous man, *Lor*, yet sinned; Her Relation would not save her, and would not excuse her: Why should any say, I am the Child of such a godly Parent; I am the Servant of such a godly Master; I am a member of such a Church: 'Tis not the nearest and the best Relations will save us from the hand of God, if we sin against him: Here was the nearest Relation, and yet not exempted from the severest punishment.

4. If this story of *Lor's Wife* be true, and do indeed live in our memory, Then here you may see what an evil thing it is to look back from that which God hath delivered us from. It is an evil thing to sin against that Deliverance that hath a *Such* written on it: In the 9th. of *Ezra*, see how he argues, *After all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespasses; seeing that thou our God hast*

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punished us lesse than our iniquities deserve, and hath given us Such deliverance as this (A deliverance with a Such written on it) should we again break thy Commandements, and joyn in affinity with the people of these abominations? Wouldest not thou be angry with us, till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant, nor escaping? See, 'tis a very evil thing for to sin after a Deliverance that hath Such written upon it; but to turn back, or to look back unto that which God hath delivered us from, that is yet worse: For the Lord to have delivered us from Superstition, from Idolatry, and to look back to that which God hath delivered us from, What's this, but after the manner of Lot's Wife? But you see how it far'd with her. Well then you see, it's an evil thing to look back to that which God hath delivered us from.

5. If this story of Lot's Wife be true, and live in our memory; Here we may learn by way of Instruction, That former Deliverance will not secure us from future Destruction: She was delivered with a great Deliverance, and yet destroyed with a great Destruction: The like is said of the Israelites in the Epistle of Jude: *I will put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, How that the Lord having saved the people out of the Land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.* Delivered, and yet destroyed. We are apt to think, O we have been delivered thus, and thus, and therefore we shall not be destroyed: God delivered them with an high hand, and they were destroyed with an high hand: Lot's Wife delivered with an high hand, and destroyed with an high hand. Former Deliverance will not secure us from future Destruction.

6. If this story of Lot's Wife be true, and live in our memory, then here we may learn by way of In-

Instruction; 'Tis ill sinning when God is punishing: It's good begging while God is giving; but O 'tis ill sinning while God is punishing: If he be angry, yea but a little, blessed are all those that trust in him: Be wise now therefore O ye Kings; be instructed ye Judges of the Earth, serve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce with trembling: Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way. The way, What way? Why, in the way of his judgments; When God is fetching his stroke at a people, stand out of the way then of Gods stroke: God was striking at *Sodom*, and *Lot's Wife* came in the way of his stroke, and she dyed for it; It's ill sinning, when God is punishing.

7. If that this story be true, and live in your memory, then here you may learn, That those that are exemplary in sinning, shall be exemplary in punishing: She was the first that sinned this kind of sin, and the first that fell under such a Judgement. The Lord mark'd *Jeroboam*, *Jeroboam the Son of Nebat, that made Israel to sin*; Why he was the first, and God set a mark upon him. This is that wicked *Ahaz*, that in the time of his affliction sinned yet more: What a mark did God set upon *Judas*, in his life, in his death? Why he was the first that made a treacherous retreat from the Gospel; He was the head of those *Halbertiers* that came to attatch Christ: So an Apostate, usually doth head the persecuting party, but God set a mark upon him. Those that are first in sin, and those that are exemplary in sinning, God will make exemplary in punishment.

8. If this story of *Lot's Wife* be true, and do live in our memory: Then here we may see what an evil thing it is to mis-chuse in our chusing time.

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Lot had two choises once, he had a choice before, when there was a difference between *Abram's* Servants and his, *Abraham* condescends, and gives him his choice: *Lot* thou art my younger, but I'll yield for peace sake (as we should all do for peace sake) but *Lot* take thy choice; all the Country was before him, and he chose *Sodom*, but God fired him out of that choice: Now he was to go out of *Sodom*, he and his Wife and Children were to go out of *Sodom*, and *Lot* (saith God) fly to the Mountain: Not so my Lord, there is little *Zoar*, let me go thither, and God let him have his choice, and yielded to him, but it cost him dear: What an evil thing is it to mis-chuse in chusing times?

9. If this story of *Lot's* Wife be true, and do live in our memory, Then here we may see by way of Instruction: That though God will lay out an hiding place for his people, in times of publick Calamity: Yet if they sin in the way, they may perish or miscarry in the very face of their hiding place. It appears that *Lot* had lost his Wife before he came at *Zoar*, *Gen. 19. 30.* And *Lot* went up out of *Zoar*, and dwelt in the Mountain, and his two Daughters with him. We don't read, he lost her in *Zoar*, but in the way to *Zoar*; he would not go to the Mountain that God chose for him, but to *Zoar*: Now here in the way he sinned, and in the way to this hiding place he lost his Wife: So that though God in time of publick Calamity, may indulge, or find out a hiding place for us, yet if we sin, we may perish even in the very way to our hiding place.

10. If this story of *Lot's* Wife be true, and do live in our memory, Then here we may learn by way of Instruction, That 'tis possible that a Religious Family may have a black mark of Gods Indignation:

nation: *Lot's Family* was a Religious Family. Never bear upon it that you are a Religious Family; It's possible that a Religious Family may have a black mark of Gods Indignation, and possibly the death of one Relation may be a snare to the other: We know the sin that *Lot* committed afterwards with his Daughters. The death of this Relation, a snare to the other, and God doth know how to strike at one through the sides of another: God strikes at *Lot* through the sides of his Wife; God knows how to strike at one through the sides of another.

ii. And the main of all is this: If the story of *Lot's Wife* be true, and do live in our memory, O what an evil thing is it to look back, and to decline in declining times? How quick was God with *Lot's Wife* for looking back? She never sinned this sin before, 'twas the first sin that ever in this kind she committed; and she might have said: Why Lord, It's the first time that ever I committed it, and indeed I was taken before I was aware thus to look back, I did not consider well of What I did: But God turned her presently into a Pillar of Salt: God was quick with her: Why? For to shew thus much, God will be quick with Apostates: God will turn the Turners; She turned to look back, and God turned her into a Pillar of Salt. And so for those that turn, God will turn; God will turn Turners: God will be quick with Turners; God will turn Turners into a Pillar of Salt. God is quick with Apostates, and such as do decline. And thus I have given you these eleven things by way of Instruction.

As many I might give you in a way of Caution, but the Instance only in one.

If

thy Judgments, and thy way's past finding out. Here are four, and but four that came out of *Sodom*, and yet one of the four were destroyed: God may deliver our Family in the time of common Calamity, and yet some of our house may suffer. God in the midst of Judgment doth remember mercy: In the midst of Mercy he Remembers Judgment. In the midst of Judgment upon *Sodom*, he remembred mercy for *Lot*, and for his Family: In the midst of mercy upon *Lot*, and upon his Family, he remembred Judgment upon *Lot's* Wife. The same thing may be done by one in a way of Faith, and he may live, and done by another in a way of unbelief, and he may die. *Abraham* looked upon *Sodom* when *Sodom* was a burning, *Abraham* got up early in the morning, at the 27 ver. to the place where he stood before the Lord, and he looked toward *Sodom* and *Gemorrah*, and toward all the Land of the Plain, and beheld, and lo, the smoke of the Country went up, as the smoke of a Furnace: *Abraham* beheld, and looked upon it in a way of believing and lived: *Lot's* Wife looks back in a way of unbelief, and she dies. The same thing may be done by one in a way of Faith, and live, and by another in a way of unbelief and die. But literally here, two shall be in one bed, the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left; two shall be in the field, the one shall be taken, and the other left: Two in a bed, *Lot* and his Wife, one taken, and the other left: Two in a field, they were going both out of *Sodom*, one taken, and the other left; Lord how unsearchable are thy Judgments, and thy wayes past finding out.

2. If this story of *Lot's* Wife be true, and do live in our Memory, then here we may learn by way

way of Instruction, and see how far a Man or Woman may go in Religion, and yet come short at the last: *Lot's Wife* went far, she was a professor of the first and the highest form, she had lived a long while in *Abraham's* Family, she had walked with her Husband *Lot*, and enjoyed his prayers many years; she stood out against the wickedness of *Sodom* while she was there; she was in some measure obedient unto the voice of the Angel in going out of *Sodom*: and (as some observe) she was a Professor of seventy years growth, and yet she miscarried: How far may Men and Women go in Religion, and yet miscarry at the last?

3. If this story of *Lot's Wife* be true, and do live in our memory; Then you may learn, and see by way of Instruction; That the best Relations will not secure from the hand of God if we continue evil: She was the nearest Relation to a Holy Righteous man, *Lot*, yet sinned; Her Relation would not save her, and would not excuse her: Why should any say, I am the Child of such a godly Parent; I am the Servant of such a godly Master; I am a member of such a Church: 'Tis not the nearest and the best Relations will save us from the hand of God, if we sin against him: Here was the nearest Relation, and yet not exempted from the severest punishment.

4. If this story of *Lot's Wife* be true, and do indeed live in our memory, Then here you may see what an evil thing it is to look back from that which God hath delivered us from. It is an evil thing to sin against that Deliverance that hath a *Such* written on it: In the 9th. of *Ezra*, see how he argues, *After all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespasses; seeing that then our God hath*

punished us lesse than our iniquities deserve, and hath given us Such deliverance as this (A deliverance with a Such written on it) should we again break thy Commandements, and joyn in affinity with the people of these abominations? Wouldest not thou be angry with us, still thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant, nor escaping? See, 'tis a very evil thing for to sin after a Deliverance that hath Such written upon it; but to turn back, or to look back unto that which God hath delivered us from, that is yet worse: For the Lord to have delivered us from Superstition, from Idolatry, and to look back to that which God hath delivered us from, What's this, but after the manner of *Lot's Wife*? But you see how it far'd with her. Well then you see, it's an evil thing to look back to that which God hath delivered us from.

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II. And the main of all is this: If the story of *Lot's Wife* be true, and do live in our memory, O what an evil thing is it to look back, and to decline in declining times? How quick was God with *Lot's Wife* for looking back? She never sinned this sin before, 'twas the first sin that ever in this kind she committed; and she might have said: Why Lord, It's the first time that ever I committed it, and indeed I was taken before I was aware thus to look back, I did not consider well of What I did: But God turned her presently into a Pillar of Salt: God was quick with her: Why? For to shew thus much, God will be quick with Apostates: God will turn the Turners; She turned to look back, and God turned her into a Pillar of Salt. And so for those that turn, God will turn; God will turn Turners; God will be quick with Turners; God will turn Turners into a Pillar of Salt. God is quick with Apostates, and such as do decline. And thus I have given you these eleven things by way of Instruction.

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If

If this story of *Lot's Wife* be true, and do live in our Remembrance; By way of Caution: Why should we not all take heed how we look back to worldly Interests, in the day when the Son of man shall be Revealed, or in this day of the Gospel, when the Son of man is Revealed? You see what became of *Lot's Wife* for her looking back: and therefore why should we not all of us take heed, how we look back or decline in this day that the Son of man is Revealed?

You will say, what shall we do that we may not decline? What shall we do that we may so remember *Lot's Wife*, that we may not decline or look back in declining times?

I shall not speak at large unto the Argument: Onely thus,

If you would not look back in declining times, shut your eyes and your ears against all the allurements and threatnings of the World: For the Devil he tempts much now in these daies to false Worship, as he tempted our Saviour Christ, when he said: *All this will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me*: That was false Worship: So now the Devil saith, *All this living and preferment will I give thee, if thou wilt worship me so*: This Cupboard with Plate will I give thee; this Chamber hang with Tapestry will I give thee, if thou wilt worship so: This great living and preferment will I give thee, if thou wilt worship so: If thou wilt not worship, all this will I take from thee: Would you therefore be kept, that you may never look back? Shut your eyes, and shut your ears, go blindfold into Gods Commandements, as *Abraham* your Father did.

1. If you would not look back in declining times:

times: Take heed of leaving any Nest-egg in the day of Reformation; if there be an Egg left in the Nest, sure enough the Hen will return to the Nest to lay yet. So in the time of Reformation, If a Nest-Egg be left, as God knows what Nest-eggs were left among us: But I say, If in a time of publick Reformation Nest-eggs be left, there will be a return of the Hen to the Nest-egg there. Will you know what that good man said, Mr. *Dearing* before Queen *Elizabeth*: The house is swept; and the Dirt is behind the Door, there comes a Hen and scrapes it all out again: But I put it into this, If a Nest-egg be left, be it a publick Reformation, or a private Reformation; yet if a Nest-egg be left, there will be a returning back again.

3. If you would not look back in declining times, Then be sure that you never part friends with any sin: Some will part with their sin, but they will part friends with it. Saith one, By the grace of God I will never commit this sin again, and I'll go but this time into this company, but after this time I will never go to them again: and so they part friends with their sin: Why, if a man be to part with his friend, he goes part of the way with him, and having parted friends, they look after one another: And so when a man parts friends with his sin, he will certainly look back again: But if a man would never look back to his sin in declining times, let him part as an enemy to it. He that will part friends with his sin, will certainly return to his sin again.

4. If you would not look back in declining times, be sure of this: That you do not run a share, or a part in the Vessel that God is about to destroy: Where my grief is, there is my finger; where my
love

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love is, there is my eye; If I have a share and a part in the Vessel that God is about to destroy, I shall look after the Vessel, what becomes thereof. Why now *Babylon* that art to be destroyed, *Babylon* is not to repent; *Babylon* that art to be destroyed: *Babylon* is not to be reformed: Wash dirt an hundred times, and you cannot make clean the dirt; *Babylon* is not to be reformed, but to be destroyed; Take heed therefore of running a part or a share in the Boat or Vessel that God hath laid out for destruction, for if you have a part and a share there, you will look back. But

5. If you would not look back in declining times, let us consider in the fear of the Lord, what an evil thing it is to look back: Briefly thus.

1. Thereby you lose all you have wrought; Thereby you will lose all your losses; There is much gain in losing for Jesus Christ; There is gain in our losses; by looking back you will lose all your losses, and the gain thereby.

2. Thereby you will lose the Testimony of your own Integrity; Yet saith God, *Job* held fast his Integrity: And if we don't look back in declining times, then our hearts will tell us, we were upright before him, but if we look back in declining times, our consciences will tell us we were never right before him.

3. Thereby also you will lose the comfort of those glorious times that are to come: Friends and Beloved, glorious times there are a coming, that are at the back side of this hedge, that are but a little way off; that are on the back-side of this affliction; glorious times that are a coming, and when they come, if ye stand and hold out, you will have the comfort of those glorious times: But

if

if now you look back in the interim, you will lose the comfort of all those glorious times when they come, and come they will, and come they shall.

4. Thereby also you will, and shall be satisfied with your own waies, for the back-slider in heart shall be satisfied with his own waies, you will look back, and you shall have enough on't (saith God.)

5. And thereby also you will be made unmeet for the Kingdom of Heaven; For he that puts his hand to the Plow, and looks back, is unfit for the Kingdom of Heaven.

6. And thereby also you may be made a Pillar of Salt, and an example unto after Ages; for God is quick with Apostates, and with them that do look back: You have heard how quick the Lord was with *Lot's Wife*, and she was but a Type. Now therefore, as ever you do desire (Friends and Beloved) as ever you do desire, that you may not lose what you have wrought for so many years; as you do desire that you may hold fast, and not lose the gain of your former losses; as you do desire that you may hold fast your Integrity; as you do desire that you may have the comfort of those glorious times that are a coming; as you do desire you may not be satisfied with your own waies, and as you do desire you may not be unfit for the Kingdom of Heaven; and as you do desire that you may not be made examples for after Ages: I beseech you in the Name of the Lord, and I desire this Exhortation may take upon my own heart as well as yours; Let us remember *Lot's Wife*. It was the Lady *Janes* speech to *Harding* that Apostate, *Harding*, *Harding*, Remember *Judas*; *Harding*, remember
Francis

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Francis Spira : And let us remember *Lot's Wife*.

And if you will ask, How should we so remember *Lot's Wife*, that we may not decline in declining times? Work these things upon your hearts; This story and example upon your hearts: Take this for a constant Rule, that Passion is the best door-keeper of Memory: The more I am affected with a thing for the present, the more I shall remember it for the future; and therefore if you would remember *Lot's Wife*, go and work this story now upon your own hearts; and as the times are declining, the more declining the times are, the more do you rub your Memory with this Example of *Lot's Wife*, and call upon your selves: Come O my soul remember *Lot's Wife*: Brethren, Friends, Beloved, our Saviour Christ hath left you this Example, he hath commanded you and me to remember *Lot's Wife*; 'Tis an Example that he hath sanctified, that we may take heed hereby, and therefore at all times call upon your selves, and your own souls; come O my soul, hast thou forgotten *Lot's Wife*? Thou beginnest to grow cold, and dead, and dull, hast thou forgotten *Lot's Wife*? Come O my Soul, remember *Lot's Wife*: Thus shall you be able to stand, and not to look back, and I pray think upon it, that we may not be of the number of those that draw back unto perdition, but of those that do believe to the saving of your souls: Think therefore of these things, and remember *Lot's Wife*.

F I N I S.



THere is lately Printed an Excellent
Treatise called the *World Conquer'd: Or a
Believers Victory over the VWorld*, laid open
in several Sermons on 1 *Iohn* 5. 4. By A. A.
The Author of *Vindicia Pietatis*.

Sold by *Nath. Crouch* at the *Cross-Keys* in
Bishops-gate-street, near *Leaden-Hall*.

